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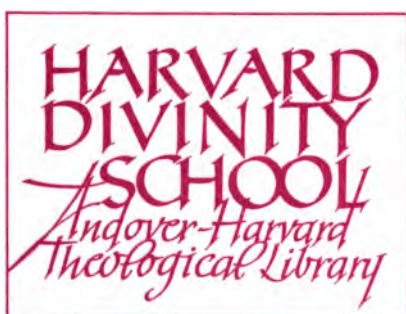
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A

DISCOURSE,

EMBRACING

THE CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS HISTORY

OF

RHODE-ISLAND;

DELIVERED APRIL 4, A. D. 1838,

AT THE

CLOSE OF THE SECOND CENTURY FROM THE FIRST
SETTLEMENT OF THE ISLAND.

BY ARTHUR A. ROSS,

Pastor of the First Baptist Church in Newport, R. I.

PROVIDENCE:

H. H. BROWN...25 MARKET SQUARE.

1838.

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P R E F A C E.

No people can dwell on the pages of their own history with more supreme satisfaction, or derive from that history more lasting and salutary instructions, than the people of Rhode-Island. To be ignorant of our own history, betrays a most criminal apathy to our own intellectual happiness, and to the high and elevated principles of the men from whom we descended, and by whom were transmitted and secured to us, the blessings of civil and religious freedom.

The object of the writer in the following pages, has been to embody and present before the risen and rising generation, some of the most important facts and incidents of our history, during the past century. Nor could the writer feel justified, in a discourse of this nature, without alluding to the circumstances and events which led to the settlement of this State, and especially of our own loved Rhode-Island.

The war of the Revolution, as connected with the history of this Island, which, for the greater part of that long continued and sanguinary conflict, was in possession of the enemy, constitutes unavoidably a large proportion of this discourse. Nor can the writer persuade himself to believe that the reminiscence of those events can be uninteresting to the descendants of those illustrious men, who shared

in the perils of the Revolution, and achieved the American Independence.

The Ecclesiastical History of Rhode-Island, rich in interest to the Philanthropist and Christian, and furnishing ample materials for the Historian, has been only glanced at, the writer being conscious, in a work like this, of his utter inability to do justice to that part of our history, and has believed that an abridged history of the Churches on this Island, would more deeply interest the reader than general observations, and contribute to the glory of the riches of Divine grace. If the following pages shall in any wise tend to promote these objects, the highest ambition of the Author will be accomplished.

Newport, May 1, 1838.

A DISCOURSE.

EZRA IV, 15.

THAT SEARCH MAY BE MADE IN THE BOOK OF THE RECORDS OF THY FATHERS.

Two centuries have now passed away, since the venerable John Clarke and his little band of persecuted brethren, entered this then inhospitable and savage desert, rejoicing in it as an asylum of rest, from the relentless hand of religious intolerance and persecution. Here they erected the temple of civil and religious freedom, and on her sacred altar, pledged their persons, lives and estates, to maintain unimpaired, the inalienable rights of man.

In consequence of the unjust and arbitrary decisions of the General Court of Massachusetts, Mr. Clarke and several others were appointed by their friends, to select a spot where they might inhale the atmosphere of freedom; and worship God according to the dictates of their own conscience, unmolested. After wandering a while in the wilderness of New Hampshire, they directed their

course to the south, intending to find a residence in a more congenial climate. On their arrival at Providence, they were very kindly received by Roger Williams, who had previously been banished from the Colony of Massachusetts, for his peculiar views of civil and religious polity; and who among other things, (says Mr. Callender,) was charged with insisting on the most unlimited toleration or liberty of conscience.

Mr. Williams recommended to these wandering exiles, the waters of the Narragansett Bay, as the peculiar residence of the genius of religious freedom, and advised them to take up their abode on her shores. He also very kindly offered his services in procuring them a settlement; and through his influence with the two great Sachems of Narragansett, Canonicus and Myantonomo, (whose confidence he enjoyed) a deed of Aquitneck, (now Rhode-Island) and other Islands of the Bay, was procured in the name of Mr. Coddington and friends, in March, 1638.

These venerable men commenced the settlement of this Island, under the influence of sentiments the most pure and elevated, that ever inspired the heart, or dignified the character of man. They were bound together as a community of freemen—not by chartered rights and conventional stipulations—but by moral and religious principle. By mutual voluntary pledges, given by a solemn appeal to the great searcher of hearts, for their faithful performance.

The following is the original Charter of the American Isle of Rhodes:—"We, whose names are underwritten, do swear solemnly in the presence of the Great Jehovah, to incorporate ourselves into a body politic; and as he shall help us, will submit our persons, lives and estates, unto the Lord Jesus Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords, and to all those most perfect laws of his, given us in his most holy word of truth, to be guided and judged thereby."

Such were the principles adopted, and such the senti-

ments set forth, as the great charter of rights, by those who had the honor of planting the first community of civilized man on Rhode-Island.

The first settlement on the Island, was commenced at its northern extremity, where a town was regularly laid out, and at first named Pocasset; subsequently Portsmouth. But so rapid was the increase of the Colony, during the following summer, that it was deemed advisable for their mutual prosperity, to commence a settlement on some other part of the Island.

Accordingly, the following spring, Mr. Clarke with several others, removed to this part of the Island, and commenced a settlement, to which they gave the name of Newport. The Island itself, subsequently, by order of the General Court, was called the Isle of Rhodes, or Rhode-Island, in memory of that celebrated Isle of the Mediterranean Sea. The first dwelling-house built in this town, was erected by Nicholas Easton—all prior dwellings were tents and wigwams. Both towns were united under the same simple patriarchal form of government, of which Mr. William Coddington was chosen Magistrate, or Judge. A few months subsequently, they chose Mr. John Coggeshall, Nicholas Easton, and William Brenton, his assistants. Mr. Coggeshall descended from an ancient and respectable family in England. He came to this country with Mr. Coddington, in 1630, and was admitted a freeman of the town of Boston, in 1632. He was a member of the first Board of Selectmen of Boston, and represented that town in General Court, in 1634-5-6, and the Spring session of 1637, but was disfranchised for conscience toward God, that same year.—His disfranchisement with others, created great discontent among his friends, which led to their removal, and finally to the settlement of this Island. Mr. Coggeshall enjoyed the confidence of the Colony of Rhode-Island, and at the time of his death, which occurred in 1647, he was President of the Colony. He lies in the Coggeshall

burial place, a little south of Newport. The, following is the inscription on his tomb-stone :—

“ Here lyeth the Body of
JOHN COGGESHALL, SEN. ESQ.
 who died the First President of the Colony, the 27th of Nov.
 1647, aged about 56 years.”

His descendants are still numerous on the Island, and many of them are among our most respectable citizens.

Mr. Coddington came to this country with Governor Hutchinson, having been appointed in 1629, by the British government, one of the Assistants of the Massachusetts Colony. He engaged in mercantile business in Boston, and built the first brick house in that town. But notwithstanding all the facilities he there enjoyed of promoting his own temporal prosperity, yet he chose to relinquish all these, for the sake of religious freedom.—Accordingly, in 1638, with the beloved Clarke and sixteen others, he left the Colony of Massachusetts, and commenced the settlement of this Island; and was by his companions in tribulation, unanimously elected Chief Magistrate or Judge of the Colony; which office he held until the Island was incorporated with Providence and Warwick. In 1651, he was appointed by the Supreme Authority of England, Governor of the Island, pursuant to a power reserved in the patent, by which the Island became again separated from the Providence Plantations.

But the people, jealous of their rights and fearful that their freedom might be endangered, dispatched Mr. Williams and Mr. Clarke to England, to get it revoked. On receiving due notice from England, Mr. Coddington gave up his commission and retired to private life, when the Island again became united with the Plantations. Mr. Coddington was again elected Governor of the Colony, in 1674–1675, and 1678, on which year he died, aged 78 years. He was a man of extensive learning, and assisted in framing the body of laws, which has been the basis of our constitution and government ever since.—Governor Coddington was interred in the family burial

place, which at his death he gave the Society of Friends, (in Farewell-street,) just South of the North Baptist meeting-house. The freemen of Newport, in Town Meeting, August 30, 1836, appointed a Committee to repair the monument at the head of the grave of this distinguished friend and advocate of civil and religious freedom.

The last of the original purchasers and proprietors of this Island, was Henry Bull, Esq. who died in 1693, aged 84 years. He built a house at the settlement on the North part of the Island, in 1638, and was one of the seven proprietors, who in 1639, commenced the settlement of this town. "He held various public offices in this Colony from its first settlement, until a few years before his death. He was Governor of the Colony, in 1685, after which, being at a very advanced age, he relinquished public employment, to end his days in domestic peace; but after the revolution in England, (the Colony Charter having been vacated, and Rhode-Island put under the government of Sir Edmund Andros, who held it until the spring of 1689,) he was induced again to come forward into public life.

"After Sir Edmund Andros was imprisoned in Boston, the freemen of Rhode-Island met in Newport on the 1st of May, 1689, and determined to resume their former Charter and government, and proceeded to choose their officers accordingly; but of the persons appointed, many refused to accept, and among the number, the Governor elect, in consequence of the boldness and responsibility of the measure, the dangerous and unsettled state of the times, the uncertainty what reception their proceedings might meet in England, and what personal consequences might fall upon those most forward in the undertaking.

"The government was not fully organized until the February following, all which time, none of the principal inhabitants could be found of sufficient nerve, to accept the gubernatorial chair, but this man, then at a very advanced age. He was then appointed by the Assembly, ac-

cepted the office, and served until the next annual election, when he was again elected, but positively refused to serve any longer, as the danger which had deterred others, no longer existed, at least to the same extent."

The house erected by Governor Bull, in Newport, is of stone, and still standing on the East side of Spring-street, near Broad-street. Governor Bull lies buried in the Coddington burial place, where a plain and unostentatious slab points the passing stranger to the spot, where sleep the mouldering ashes of this bold and fearless patriot.

Henry Bull, Esq. of Newport, is his lineal descendant, and now in possession of the patrimonial estate of his ancestor.

In 1643, Mr. Williams, as the agent of the Colonies of Narragansett Bay, obtained a Charter of incorporation from the British Crown, granting them permission to make laws for themselves, so far as the nature and constitution of the place would admit, subject to the laws of England.

In 1663, Mr. Clarke, who for several years had been in England, as agent of the Colonies, procured a Charter, by which the province was incorporated a body politic, by the name of the Governor and Company of the Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations, in New-England, in America.

This act of incorporation, securing as it does to all, the inalienable rights of man, the free and unrestricted exercise of his own judgment and conscience, on all questions of religion, the freemen of Rhode-Island have guarded with a kind of patriotic enthusiasm, which has rebuked with severity, the hand put forth to mar the form of this Magna Charta of civil and religious freedom.

Mr. Williams is justly and deservedly venerated by the people of Rhode-Island, as the bold and uncompromising advocate of religious toleration ; and wrestled hard for liberty of conscience for himself and his fellow men. But the name of Mr. Clarke, first mentioned in the Charter of Rhode-Island, should be cherished in the

same grateful remembrance, by every friend of civil and religious freedom. He was the companion of Mr. Williams in tribulation for conscience sake, and although his feet were not made fast in the stocks, yet he suffered imprisonment and bonds, and was sentenced to receive forty stripes save ten, by the religious conscience-keepers of Massachusetts. To both, under God, the people of Rhode-Island are greatly indebted, for the blessings they now enjoy.

No legislative jurisdiction in Rhode-Island, has ever been exercised or assumed over the creeds or consciences of men; but the most free and unlimited exercise of the mind on all questions of religion and conscience, has at all times been enjoyed. Rhode-Island has demonstrated to the world, that the Church needs not the arm of civil power to direct her councils or control her interests; that Jesus Christ is king in his own kingdom; that she needs no other protection or support, than that of Jesus Christ; the civil power leaving each and every one to act according to the dictates of their own conscience, and depriving none of the rights of freemen, for believing this, or disbelieving that. So far from legislative interference and restraint, the very first act of legislation decreed that every person who submits peaceably to civil government, in this Colony, shall worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience, unmolested.

In 1644, it was decreed by the General Court, that none be accounted a delinquent for doctrine, provided it be not repugnant to the government, or the laws established.

In 1647, it was further ordered and decreed by the same body, "That all men may walk as their own consciences persuade them, every one in the name of his God. And let the sheep and lambs of the Most High walk together in this Colony, without molestation, in the name of Jehovah their God, forever and ever." And to the honor of Rhode-Island and the glory of the Christian name, let it be told to our children from generation

to generation, that when in 1656, the Colonies of Plymouth, Massachusetts, Hartford, and New-Haven, attempted to urge their sanguinary edicts against the Quakers on the Colony of Rhode-Island, calling on the legislature for an act of proscription, and enforcing that call by threatening to cut off all commercial intercourse with them, in case they refuse to comply, they nobly and promptly answer—"We shall strictly adhere to the foundation principles on which this Colony was first settled, to wit: that every man who submits peaceably to civil government in this Colony, shall worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience, without molestation."

Doctor McSparran, a missionary of the Church of England, who visited this country about the year 1720, and who labored for several years on the Narragansett side of the Bay, in a book of his, published in 1752, has recorded some important facts in the history of Rhode-Island, whether from love or ill will, I leave the reader to judge.

"The first settlers of Rhode-Island," says the Dr. "peregrinated through the wilderness and fell in with Rhode-Island, and removed their families and effects to Providence.

"These Rhode-Island refugees resolved themselves by their own, instead of better authority, into a body politic, with liberty of conscience allowed to people of all persuasions. In Connecticut, independency is the religion of the State. But in Rhode-Island, no religion at all is established. Here, a man may with impunity, be of any persuasion, or of none at all. But the Quakers for the most part, are the people in power.

"As Quakerism first broke out in England, in 1651; so in 1654, emissaries of that enthusiasm were dispatched to the West Indies. And no sooner did their preachers appear in Rhode-Island, than they found many too well prepared to receive this pestilent heresy. The twenty-four years that had passed away since their removal from

England, and the seventeen since their settlement in Rhode-Island, had carried off the stage most of those who had received the first rudiments of religion in their mother country. And as Quakerism prevailed, learning was decried, and ignorance and heresy so increased, that neither Epephanus' nor Sir Richard Blackmore's Catalogue, contains more heterodox and conflicting opinions in religion, than are to be found in this little corner.

"The magistrates of Massachusetts hanged four of these quake-speakers; this, together with other severities exercised on their proselytes in that province, contributed to send shoals of these sectaries to Rhode-Island. In 1700, (says the Dr.) after Quakerism and other heresies had in their turn, ruled over and tinged all the inhabitants for forty-six years, the Church of England, which had been lost here, by the neglect of the Crown, entered as it were unobserved and unseen, and yet not without some success.

"In 1702, a little Church was formed in Newport, the metropolis of the Colony, and that in which I labor in Narragansett. There have been two incumbents before me, neither of which had resolution enough to grapple with the difficulties of the mission, more than a year a piece.

"I entered this field in 1721, and found the people not a *tasula rasa*, or clean sheet of paper, on which I might make any impression I pleased; but a field full of briars and thorns and noxious weeds, that were all to be eradicated, before I could implant within them the simplicity of truth. But, by the blessing of God, I have brought over some hundreds to the Church. And among the hundreds I have baptized, there are at least one hundred and fifty who receive the sacrament from my hands, from 20 years old and upward to 70 or 80.

"Besides the members of our Church, (continues the Dr.) who I may boast are the best of the people—being converts not from convenience and civil encouragement, but from conscience and conviction—there are Quakers,

and Anabaptists of four sorts ; Independents, and a still greater number devoid of all religion, and attend no kind of worship. In all the other Colonies the law obliges men to attend religious worship on the Sabbath, somewhere. But in Rhode-Island, liberty of conscience is carried to an irreligious extreme.”*

It is not my intention, however, to dwell on the history of the State, nor even of this Island, beyond the limits of the past century. The beloved Calender, whose name is associated with the history of this Church, in his celebrated discourse delivered in this place one hundred years ago, has given us a brief, but faithful history of the events which led to the settlement of this Island, and its subsequent history for one hundred years.

The duty assigned me on the present occasion, is a continuation of the history of Rhode-Island, commencing with the close of the first Century. Nor can it be supposed, that this can be comprised in a discourse of ordinary length, nor even of twice the length of Mr. Calender's.

And here it is but an act of justice for me to acknowledge, that for the materials of this discourse, I am chiefly indebted to Henry Bull, Esq. of this town, whose efforts to collect and preserve the history of Rhode-Island, posterity alone can fully appreciate, and which entitles him to a name among the benefactors of the human race.—To Benjamin B. Howland, Esq. and other gentlemen of Newport, I am indebted for many facts and incidents

* It is to be lamented that great and good men, when speaking or writing of those who differ from them only in matters of conscience, should not more implicitly regard the Apostle's injunction, “ speak evil of no man ;” cultivate that charity which is averse to give offence, and seek to maintain an amicable intercourse with all mankind. Could the Dr. have lived at a more fortunate age of the world, when the great principles of religious toleration and liberty of conscience were more perfectly understood, it is believed he must have been convinced, that his charges against the Quakers, were unmerited and severe.

connected with the history of this Island, during the past century.

From March, 1738, at which time Mr. Calender delivered his sermon, to 1744, but little is found in the history of Rhode-Island to interest the reader, save the local affairs of the Colony. In 1742, the boundary line between the Colony of Massachusetts and Rhode-Island, was settled at Providence, by commissioners appointed by the King, before whom the parties were heard by counsel.

Rhode-Island had previously contended with her litigious neighbors, only for the gore of land which now constitutes the town of Cumberland. But at this time, she pressed her claim for three miles east of Narragansett Bay, as expressed in her Charter from his Majesty King Charles II. The Commissioners decided that Rhode-Island was not only entitled to the gore, but also to the three miles Eastward of the Bay, which now comprises the towns of Little-Compton, Tiverton, Bristol, Warren, and Barrington.

From this decision, the Colony of Massachusetts appealed to the King in Council—which appeal was heard and tried in England, and the decision of the Commissioners confirmed and established by the decree of his Majesty, on the 28th of May, 1746.

On the 4th of March, 1744, the government of France which had been secretly aiding the enemies of Great Britain, with which she was at war, assumed a belligerent attitude, and proclaimed war with that government; which was responded to by the British Parliament the same month, in a declaration of war with France.

Previous to the declaration of war, the Colonies had been apprized of the approaching storm, and were aroused to a sense of the threatening dangers with which they were surrounded. The French privateers which hovered round the coast of New-England, greatly embarrassed her commerce, and almost entirely destroyed her valuable fisheries.

The Legislature of Massachusetts decided, after much discussion, to invite the other Colonies to unite with them in an expedition against Louisburgh, the Gibraltar of the French American Provinces. Into the spirit of this enterprise, the legislature of Rhode-Island entered with patriotic ardor, and at the May session of that body, passed a resolution to raise a regiment of one hundred and fifty men, exclusive of officers; and that the Colony sloop *Tartar*, be fitted out with a complement of 90 men, exclusive of officers.

The expedition was crowned with success, and after a siege of forty-nine days, the city of Louisburgh and the Island of Cape Breton, were surrendered by the French to his Britannic Majesty, June 17th, 1745.

The capture of Louisburgh by the Colonies, stung the Court of France with mortification and revenge, and they resolved to chastise them for their insolence. Accordingly, an expedition was fitted out for this purpose, "consisting of forty ships of war and fifty-six transports, with three thousand five hundred men, and forty thousand stand of arms, for the French and Indians." The Colonies saw and acknowledged their danger, from their total inability to defend themselves in case of an invasion, by so numerous and formidable a fleet; and the inhabitants of the seaport towns were thrown into the greatest consternation.

No people had more to fear from foreign invasion in New-England, than the people of Newport. From the extent of her commercial interests, their local situation, and the facility with which the town might be approached with the largest ships of war, the inhabitants were thrown into the greatest agitation and distress. Nor were these apprehensions allayed, until in October, it was ascertained that God had interposed for the Colonies, and gotten the victory with his own arm.

So disastrous was this expedition to the French, that among all this mighty and formidable fleet, destined to lay in ruins the smiling villages of New-England, not

more than two or three ships and a few transports, ever reached her coast. A violent storm at sea either destroyed or damaged many of them. Others were compelled to return on account of a most fearful pestilence which swept off hundreds of their crews, and made the bravest hearts to tremble.

The Admiral or Commander in Chief of the whole French squadron, on reaching the coast of New-England, died of mortification; or as some say, of poison. The Vice-Admiral came to a similar tragical end, by running himself through the body with his own sword. That part of the fleet which arrived on the coast, sailed with an intention of making an attack upon Annapolis, but a storm again scattered them, and they were forced to return, without effecting any part of the work of destruction originally intended.

Thus were the Colonies preserved, not by the policy of their councils, nor the prowess of their arms—but by the Providence of God. Preliminaries of peace were soon entered into between France and England, and a definitive treaty was signed in October, 1748.

The privateers of Rhode-Island distinguished themselves in this war, and during the year 1745, more than twenty prizes, some of them of immense value, were sent into Newport. One of the most bold and intrepid naval commanders of that age, or perhaps of any age, was Captain John Dennis, of Newport. He seems to have been formed for deeds of daring, and nerved to dwell amidst the sanguinary strife of war unmoved. After having captured a number of French privateers in the West Indies, a sloop of war was fitted out at Martinico, for the express purpose of his capture. But after an engagement of four hours, she was taken possession of by Captain Dennis and carried into St. Kitts. Here he received that attention which he had so justly merited from the Governor and other officers of the Island; and who, as a testimony of respect for his valuable services, presented him with a golden oar and a purse of five hundred pistoles.

The employments and pursuits of the inhabitants of this Island, during the war, were almost exclusively of a naval or military character ; and, perhaps, at no period had enjoyed greater commercial prosperity. So that as far as Newport was concerned, the return of peace was rather hostile to her interests than otherwise.

At the close of the war, a vast amount of property was owned by the people of this town ; which, however valuable in time of war, was of but little value in time of peace. Their implements of war could not readily be converted into instruments of husbandry, nor articles of merchandize, without great sacrifice to the owners. The depreciation also, of bills of credit, issued during the war, which the Colonies were unable to redeem, was severely felt by the community, and greatly embarrassed the commercial interests of the Colony.

The return of peace, however, was hailed as the harbinger of prosperity. And although the return of prosperity was the work of time, yet the enterprising spirit of the people soon exerted itself to repair the losses which had been sustained. Commerce again flourished, industry and enterprise were encouraged, and public confidence revived.

But scarcely had the Colonies time to reap the benefits of peace, before their brightening prospects were again overshadowed by the dark elements of strife, and the tocsin of war again spread anxiety and distress through the whole breadth of the land.

After a period of only eight years, in May, 1758, Great Britain under George II. formally declared war with France ; which declaration was reciprocated by France the following month. The causes which led to this war, commonly distinguished by the name of the "French and Indian War," were the alleged encroachments of the French, on the English settlements in America.

This war terminated in 1763, by the cession of Nova Scotia, Canada, the Isle of Cape Breton, and all other

Islands of the Gulf and River St. Lawrence, to the British Crown. In all the splendid achievements of the British arms during these long protracted and sanguinary conflicts, the people of New-England bore a very distinguished and conspicuous part. And no town, perhaps, of equal size in New-England, contributed more to the glory of the British Crown, than Newport.

The year 1758, is also rendered memorable in the history of Rhode-Island, as opening the great political drama of Messrs. Stephen Hopkins and Samuel Ward.—Mr. Hopkins at the time, filled the chair of the Chief Magistrate, and Mr. Ward entered the field to contend with him for that honor. Mr. Ward was the favorite candidate of the South, and received the almost undivided support of the mercantile interest; while Mr. Hopkins was as warmly supported by the yeomanry of the North, and was again re-elected the three succeeding years.—In 1762, Mr. Ward was elected, but was defeated the following year and Mr. Hopkins elected. The strife of political party raged with increasing violence, until such was the heart-burning hostility of the belligerent parties, as very greatly to impair the enjoyment of domestic tranquility, and interrupt the hospitalities of social life.

In 1763, the office of Deputy Governor was vacated by the death of the Hon. John Gardiner, who then filled that place. On the meeting of the General Assembly, Mr. Hopkins and friends proposed that Mr. Ward be invited to fill that office, and that he be elected by the Assembly, then in session. Accordingly, a committee waited on Mr. Ward with this proposition, which was indignantly rejected, and a message returned, embracing the only conditions of peace, viz: that both rival candidates at the ensuing election, relinquish their pretensions and retire from the field. X

Another proposition was then submitted by the House of Assistants to Mr. Ward, to induce him to accept that office; that five, or one half of that body, would cheerfully resign their seats in favor of an equal number of his

friends, and the division of the spoils, or the appointment of the civil offices, should be equalized between the parties, at the approaching election. This proposition was too humiliating for the Spartan spirit of Mr. Ward, and consequently was as unpropitious as the former; and he returned for answer, "that no peace could be expected while Mr. Hopkins was in the chair." But repeated his willingness to relinquish his pretensions, on condition that Mr. Hopkins would do the same. Other overtures were made to Mr. Ward, but without success, and both parties prepared to enter the field with fixed and settled resolution.

The friends of Mr. Hopkins triumphed, and he was again elected; but the following spring he suffered a defeat, and Mr. Ward and friends were crowned with laurels of political glory, which they were permitted to wear the two succeeding years. At the opening of the spring campaign in 1767, Mr. Hopkins' party having been recruited and drilled for the conflict, entered the field with a fixed and settled resolution to oust the incumbents, and achieved a most splendid victory, leaving Mr. Ward minus, four hundred and fourteen. This was the last pitched battle between the belligerent parties.

At the October session of the General Assembly, overtures of peace were again made by Governor Hopkins, to Mr. Ward, which were soon followed by a cessation of hostilities, and finally resulted in a reconciliation of the parties. This proposition, highly honorable to Mr. Hopkins, was as follows, viz: that Mr. Ward and friends should nominate a Governor from those in the interest of Mr. Hopkins, and these should nominate a Deputy Governor from among the friends of Mr. Ward, and so on, alternately with the whole council: or, if Mr. Ward and friends decline the first nomination, his Honor and those associated with him, will nominate a Governor from among the friends of Mr. Ward, and so on as before.—Preliminaries were soon entered into by the parties at

Providence, and a treaty of peace was finally concluded at Newport, March 29th, 1768.

These gentlemen were again soon called from the peaceful quiet of domestic retirement, to enter the field, not of political strife as foes, but to contend for the rights of the Colonies against the encroachments of British power, as friends; to engage in the cause of American Freedom, where one soul animated each heart. They were among the first who fearlessly stood forth in defence of the rights of their country. That they fully enjoyed the confidence of their fellow-citizens, both as patriots and statesmen, is demonstrated in their choice to represent them in the first Continental Congress.

Mr. Hopkins' name stands inscribed on the proudest monument of fame—the Declaration of American Independence. And although, through the infirmities of age and long continued duties of public life, his hand trembled, his heart, never. Mr. Ward died the same year.

One of the most illustrious events in the history of this nation, and of the world, and which very deeply involved the interests of Rhode-Island, is the American Revolution. The first settlers of this country never cherished an intention, or even a desire to establish a government independent of the mother country. They settled here as her Colonies. And during all the sanguinary scenes of war, in which England had been engaged with other nations, they had faithfully demonstrated their loyalty to the British Crown.

Nor is it probable that this affectionate and loyal disposition on the part of the Colonies, could have been alienated, but for the long continued aggressions of the British ministry on their rights, touching the subject of revenue and taxation. The first act of the British Parliament to tax the Colonies, passed that body in September, 1764; the avowed object of which was to raise a revenue for the better protection of his Majesty's Colonies in New-England, by a duty paid the British Crown, on certain articles of commerce, sold in the Colonies.

This act was doubtless put forth as a feeler by the British Parliament, to prepare the way for the development of the settled policy of that Government toward the Colonies. Accordingly, the next spring, the famous, or rather infamous stamp-act, passed both Houses of Parliament. This act decreed that all deeds, notes, bonds, &c. in the Colonies, should be null and void unless executed on stamp paper, for which a duty must be paid the Crown. The former act the Colonies did not, could not approve, because it assumed the right to tax them without their consent, not being represented in that body. But such was still their loyalty and affection for the home of their fathers, that they could, and did submit to it, however oppressive and unjust.

But no sooner did a knowledge of the passage of the stamp-act reach the Colonies, than one spontaneous burst of indignation broke forth throughout the country. Remonstrances and resolutions were passed by most of the Colonial Assemblies, condemning the act in the most unqualified manner, as both unconstitutional and unjust.—So general was the dissatisfaction, so powerful the spirit of freedom in the infant Colonies, that these encroachments of British power were resisted with patriotic indignation; and in many places, paper bearing his Majesty's seal, was not permitted to land.

Associations were formed and resolutions were passed, into the spirit of which, the female sex entered with patriotic ardor, not to import or use goods imported from Great Britain, until this obnoxious and oppressive act be repealed. So universal and determined were the Colonies in their opposition to this act, that Parliament had no alternative but its repeal. This, however, was followed by another act, which struck at the last hope of freedom, and assumed the right and power, "In all cases whatsoever, to bind the Colonies." Accordingly, a new tax was laid on glass, paper, tea, &c. &c. This, together with other acts equally arbitrary and oppressive, kindled up anew the spirit of opposition to the British

ministry, which had measurably subsided on the repeal of the stamp-act.

On the meeting of Parliament in February 1769, both Houses of that body, in an address to the King, recommended that the Royal Governor of Massachusetts be directed to notice all such as manifested a spirit of disloyalty to his Majesty's edicts, that they might be sent to England and tried as traitors.

This outrage on the common principles of justice and humanity, alienated the affections of the Colonies from the mother country, and kindled up the spirit of patriotism, the fire of freedom on the American heart, until in Congress assembled, they solemnly declare to the world, appealing to the searcher of hearts for the purity of their motives, "that they are, and of right ought to be free and independent." Pledging their lives, their fortunes, and sacred honor, to be free, or die. And through all the gloomy scenes and sanguinary conflicts of the Revolution, Rhode-Island was conspicuous in the achievement of that glorious event.

The first act of popular resistance in the great drama, which separated the Colonies from Great Britain, and finally resulted in the American Independence, although claimed by and awarded to others, was made at Newport, in 1769, in the destruction of his Britannic Majesty's armed sloop Liberty.

This sloop was fitted out by the King's officers at Boston, to enforce the revenue laws on the inhabitants of this Colony; and were directed to examine and detain all vessels suspected of evading or violating those laws.—Two vessels, a sloop and a brig, belonging to Connecticut, had been seized and brought into Newport. A few days subsequently, the Captain of the brig went on board his vessel, when on inquiry for his wearing apparel, he was informed they had been removed on board his Majesty's sloop Liberty. Missing also his sword, he made inquiry for that, when he was told that a man belonging to the Liberty, was lying on it in the cabin. As he descen-

ded the cabin, he was met with a volley of savage and cowardly oaths. He seized his sword, which the men of the Liberty in vain attempted to wrest from his hands, sprang into his boat with two of his men, and made for the shore. On which the officer of the Liberty ordered his men to fire on the Captain of the brig, and a musket and brace of pistols were fired at the boat.

This unprovoked attack upon the life of Captain Packwood, so enraged the populace of Newport, that the following evening, a large number of citizens met Captain Reid of the sloop Liberty, on the Long-wharf, and demanded that the man should be sent for on shore, who fired on Captain Packwood. Accordingly, a man was sent for, but they asserted he was not the man. Another was sent for, but he was not the man; and another and another, until all the men on board, except the mate, were on shore. A number then went on board the Liberty, cut away her cables, when she drifted over to a wharf on the point, where she grounded. Here they cut away her masts, and threw overboard all her armament and stores of war, scuttled her and left her to the mercy of the elements.*

The fate of his Majesty's sloop Liberty may be learned from the Newport Mercury, July 31st, of that year. "Last Saturday, the sloop Liberty was floated by a high tide, and drifted over to Goat Island, and is grounded at the North end, near the place where the pirates were buried. What this prognosticates, we leave to the determination of astrologers."

August 7th, the same paper observes—"Last Monday evening, just after the storm of rain, hail, and lightning, the sloop Liberty, which we mentioned in our last, as

* Her boats were dragged by the insulted and enthusiastic multitude, up the Long-wharf, thence up the Parade, through Broad-street, at the head of which, on the Common, they were burned.—Tradition says, that, owing to the keel of the boats being shod with iron, such was the velocity of their locomotion, as they passed up the Parade, that a stream of fire was left in the rear, of several feet in length.

having drifted to Goat Island, near where the pirates were buried, was discovered to be on fire, and continued burning for several days, until almost entirely consumed."

This was the first act of popular violence to the British power, and the first blow struck in the American Revolution. The Gaspee was destroyed three years after, and the people of Boston made their great dish of tea for the fishes, in 1773.

In consequence of the associations and resolutions of the Colonies to suspend the importation and use of tea, a vast quantity of nearly twenty million pounds, accumulated on the hands of the East-India Company; when Parliament granted them permission to export the same to any part of the world, free from duty. Confident that under these circumstances they should find a ready market in America, they shipped large quantities to the Colonies. But it was too late. The resolution of the Americans was fixed, and the market for tea was closed. That destined for Boston, was consigned to the friends and relatives of the Royal Governor. But the populace were so enraged, that instead of its being landed on the wharf, it was thrown into the sea.

On the first intelligence of this in England, the Boston port bill was passed by the British Parliament, by which its commerce was entirely destroyed, and many of its inhabitants reduced to the greatest distress. Expressions of sympathy, and resolutions of united resistance to these arbitrary and cruel measures of the British throne, were forwarded from every part of the country to the suffering inhabitants of Boston.

The people of Newport, in town-meeting Jan. 12, 1774, passed the following resolutions: "Whereas the East-India Company, notwithstanding the resolutions of the Colonies not to import tea while it remains subject to a duty in America, have attempted to force large quantities thereof into some of our sister Colonies without their consent, in order to be sold in this country; and whereas

they may attempt to introduce it into this Colony, we the inhabitants of Newport, legally convened in town-meeting, do firmly resolve :

" 1. That the disposal of their own property is the inherent right of freemen: that there can be no property in that which another can of right take from them without their consent : that the claim of Parliament to tax America, is a claim of right to levy contributions upon us at their pleasure.

" 2. That the duty imposed by Parliament on tea, taxing the Americans, or levying contributions on them without their consent.

" 3. That a virtuous and inflexible opposition to the ministerial plan of governing America, is absolutely necessary to preserve even the shadow of liberty, and is a duty which every freeman in America owes to his country, to himself and to his posterity.

" 4. That the resolution lately entered into by the East-India Company to send out their tea to America, subject to the payment of a duty on being landed here, is an open attempt to force the ministerial plan, and a violent attack upon the liberties of the Americans.

" 5. That it is the duty of every American to oppose this attempt. That whoever shall directly or indirectly countenance this attempt, or in any wise aid or abet in unloading, receiving or vending the tea sent out by the East-India Company, or by any other person, while it remains subject to the payment of a duty in America, is an enemy to his country."

This meeting appointed a committee of vigilance, whose duty it was, on the first information or even suspicion of any tea being imported into this town, immediately to wait on the master of the vessel who shall bring the same, or the merchant to whom it shall belong, requesting that it shall not be landed ; and immediately call a town-meeting, to consider and take measures, such as the case may require.

At a subsequent town-meeting they passed the following expression of sympathy for the suffering inhabitants of Boston: "Resolved, that we have the deepest sense of the injuries done the town of Boston, by the act of Parliament lately passed, for putting an end to their trade and destroying their port: And that we consider this attack upon them, as utterly subversive of American liberty; for the same power may at pleasure destroy the trade and shut up the ports of every other Colony, so that there will be a total end of all property.

"Resolved, that we will heartily unite with the other Colonies in all reasonable and proper measures to procure the establishment of the rights of the Colonies; and particularly in case the other Colonies shall, upon this most alarming occasion, put a stop to their trade with Great Britain and the West Indies, we will heartily join with them, in the measure.

An exciting and animated paper was circulated in Newport, with this motto, "Join or die." The state of Boston was represented as a regular siege, and this a direct and hostile invasion of all the Colonies. "The Generals of despotism (it says) are now drawing the lines of circumvallation around our bulwarks of liberty, and nothing but unity, resolution and perseverance can save ourselves and posterity from what is worse than death—slavery."

The second act of popular violence to the British Crown was in the destruction of the Gaspee, in June, 1772. Lieut. Duddington, her commander, for several months had assumed an attitude calculated to cultivate any but the feelings of reverence and respect. He constantly boarded, searched, and otherwise greatly annoyed the vessels which passed up and down the river, treating their commanders with indignity and contempt. A packet passing up the river to Providence, was hailed by Lieut. Duddington, and ordered to take down her colors, as a tribute of respect to the flag of his Sacred Majesty King George. Her commander had too much of the spirit of a patriot, to bow in obsequious homage, and passe

on without paying the tribute demanded. On this, the *Gaspee* fired upon the sloop, and gave chase ; but by the successful manœuvering of the American commander, the *Gaspee* was run aground a few miles below Providence, while the sloop proceeded gallantly on her way into harbor. That same evening, at the suggestion of Mr. John Brown, of Providence, Capt. (afterwards Com.) Whipple, and a few brave spirits with him, boarded and carried her, setting the Lieutenant and his crew on shore, and the *Gaspee* on fire.*

We have now arrived at a period in the history of Rhode-Island, and especially of Newport, on which memory delights to dwell. Previous to the commencement of the American Revolution, the prosperity of Newport had been unequalled in the history of the new world.—Her streets were thronged with the intelligent and enterprising of distant lands, and the canvass of different nations whitened her capacious and delightful harbor.

The local situation of the town and the surpassing scenery of the Island, induced many strangers of wealth and distinction, to make it the place of their temporary abode. Dr. Benjamin Waterhouse, himself a native of Newport, in a piece published in the *Boston Intelligencer* in 1824, entitled, "Medical Literature of Rhode-Island, with a sketch of some of her most eminent men," says, "The Island of Rhode-Island, from its salubrity and surpassing beauty before the Revolutionary war so sadly defaced it, was the chosen resort of the rich and philosophic, from nearly all parts of the civilized world. In no spot of the thirteen or rather twelve Colonies, was there concentrated more individual opulence, learning and liberal leisure."

This was truly so in a most eminent degree. For, before our Eden was so defaced by the ruthless hand of an invading foe, we find the town of Newport taking pre-

* Col. Ephraim Bowen, now in his 86th year, is the only survivor of the party who destroyed the *Gaspee*..

cedence in colonial importance next to Boston, to whom only she yielded the palm of commercial consequence : which rank she continued to hold, until those convulsions which preceded the Revolution, commenced. As late as 1769, although New-York then surpassed her in local trade, yet Newport outrivalled her in foreign and domestic navigation. The inhabitants of New-Haven, New-London, &c., depended entirely on Newport for a market to supply themselves with foreign goods, and here they found a ready market for the produce of their own State:

Her merchants were among the most enterprising and wealthy, and one of them, Mr. Aaron Lopez, is said to have employed more than thirty sail of vessels of different descriptions, at one time. Mr. Lopez was the first, or among the first, to push the whaling business as far as the Falkland Islands. The navigation of Newport included a regular line of London packets, which, together with all others engaged in foreign trade, amounted to nearly two hundred vessels, and the coasting trade to more than three hundred and fifty. The population of Newport at this time is said to have been eleven thousand, a great portion of which was literary and refined, and savored of the elegance, opulence and aristocratic feelings of Old England. Many of the inhabitants were from the first families of England, and Newport was regarded not only for her commercial consequence, but as the emporium of fashion, refinement and taste. This aristocratic trait of character has continued among her inhabitants almost to the present day. But the change of our population, and the death, dispersion and poverty of those families, has now reduced society more conformable to the general republican manners of the country; and has levelled those arbitrary distinctions which once so generally prevailed. Among the former inhabitants of Newport were found about three hundred of the dispersed house of Israel, who contributed much to the wealth and commercial prosperity of the town. Some of them were among the most respectable and enterprising merchants.

of the place. The war, however, scattered them, and at the return of peace, very few of this class of her citizens were to be found in Newport; and of these few families, not a solitary individual now remains. And for several years before their final exit, all that were left of these descendants of Abraham, were two bachelor brothers, of the Lopez family, one of whom died about ten years ago; soon after which, the survivor removed to New-York.

The synagogue, built about the year 1762, which was once thronged with worshipers, is now never used, except occasionally for the solemnities of the funeral service of some of their descendants, who may have directed that their remains be brought to this town for interment, in the burial place of their fathers.

The burial place, the synagogue, and the street on which they front, are now kept in repair by the interest of a bequest to the Legislature of the State and the municipal authority of Newport, by the late Abraham Touro,* a native of this town, but who had mostly resided in Boston. He was son of Isaac Touro, late priest of the Jewish congregation in this place.— After the street was repaired from this fund, the freemen changed its name from Griffin to Touro-street.

*“ Abraham Touro, the founder of this fund, was a native of Newport, and son of the Rev. Isaac Touro, the Minister of the Hebrew congregation in this place. He settled in Boston, in the occupation of an insurance broker, and by his industry and integrity, acquired a large property. The Hebrew Society in Newport, for which Mr. Touro felt a deep interest, having become by deaths and removals, extinct, in 1820, he visited Newport, and caused to be erected, a permanent brick wall, to enclose the Jewish burial ground. At the time of his death, he had it in contemplation to remove to Newport, with a view to the superintendence and preservation of the Synagogue and burial ground.

His death was occasioned by an accident, while viewing a military parade at Boston, on the 3d of October, 1822, in a chaise. His horse being frightened by the firing of the artillery, became unmanageable, and Mr. T., in leaping from the carriage, fractured his leg so severely, that notwithstanding the best surgical aid, a mortification ensued, which terminated his mortal existence, on Friday the 18th of October, at the age of 48 years. His remains, pursuant to his last request, were brought to Newport and respectfully interred in the Jewish cemetery.”

Her literary and professional men of those times, were among the first in America. The names of Hunter, Halliburton, Brett, Moffat, &c. rank high among the most eminent physicians of that, or any other age. Dr. Waterhouse says, "About the year 1756, Dr. William Hunter gave at Newport, R. I. the first anatomical and surgical lectures ever delivered in the twelve Colonies. They were delivered in the Court House, two seasons in succession, by cards of invitation, and to great satisfaction. His collection of instruments was much larger than any professor exhibits at this day. Dr. Hunter was a man of talents, well educated at Edinburgh, and a gentleman of taste in the fine arts." He further says, alluding to Doctors Hunter and Halliburton, "We doubt whether Boston, New-York or Philadelphia ever had, at one and the same time, two practitioners of physic and surgery better educated and more skilful than these two gentlemen."

To them succeeded Dr. Isaac Senter, whose character is too well known for me to dwell upon, since he is quoted with approbation in Europe. The Dr. asserts, that "Metalurgical Chemistry was perhaps as well known, if not better, at that period, in Rhode-Island, as in any city in the English Colonies." He also says, "At that time there were more and complete chemical laboratories in Rhode-Island, than were to be found in Massachusetts prior to fifteen years ago."

Among the Divines of that day, who were distinguished for their learning and piety, was the Rev. John Calender, particular mention of whom is made in that part of this discourse which glances at the history of the First Baptist Church.

The Rev. Dr. Stiles, who was for a number of years Pastor of the First Congregational Church in Newport, and who was afterwards President of Yale College, was well known as a man of great literary attainments.

The Rev. Arthur Brown was born and received his

school education in Newport. He was afterwards President of Trinity College, in Dublin, and a man of celebrity as a scholar and a gentleman.

Many of you have still in recollection the late Dr. Samuel Hopkins, formerly Pastor of the First Congregational Church in this town. He was a man who shone conspicuously as a Christian, generous and liberal in his feelings, respectable as a metaphysician, and distinguished as the originator of a doctrine bearing his name.

Dr. Waterhouse says—"Newport was never wanting in good classical schools. The Episcopal Church and the Quakers, who were very numerous, took particular care of education, especially the first. Newport was the only place in New-England; where the Hebrew language was publicly read and chanted by more than three hundred of the descendants of Abraham."

In 1730, a number of gentlemen in Newport formed themselves into a society for the promotion of science and general literature, and met weekly for the discussion of questions connected with the interests, and designed to facilitate the prosperity of the society. This society continued until 1747, when it was enlarged, and the present Redwood Library Company was formed, who were incorporated in August, of that year. One of their members, Mr. Abraham Redwood, who was a member of the Society of Friends, gave them £500, which was laid out in London, in well selected and valuable books.

Mr. Henry Collins presented the Company with the valuable lot of land on which the present building was erected in 1748. During the war, the British plundered it of many of its valuable books, and carried them away. For several years after the war, the Company was in a languishing state, and through inattention, many of the remaining volumes were taken out without any regularity of delivery, and many of these were never returned.

In 1810, the Company was again revived, and the laws and regulations of the institution revised. In 1816,

there were about 1500 volumes in the library—since that time, considerable additions have been made, and it is now in a flourishing condition. It has lately received a valuable donation of books from the King of England, consisting of eighty-four volumes, of which seventy-two are large folios, and twelve octavos, “which is said to be the largest collection ever sent to this country.” The entire set has been nearly thirty-five years in the course of publication, and for the great demand for the different works of which it is composed, many of them have become exceedingly scarce, and some of them are now out of print.

The re-printing of these valuable documents of history, law, and government, was occasioned by an address of the British House of Commons, to George III. in 1800—requesting his Majesty to give directions for the better preservation, arrangement, and more convenient use of the public records of the kingdom. They consist of Doms-day book, Statutes of the Realm, Parliamentary acts of both England, Scotland, &c. &c.

Rhode-Island was formerly graced with many fine country seats, and that of the late Godfrey Malbone, near the head of the town, which was destroyed by fire in 1766, was perhaps superior to any in America, for elegance, both in the architecture of the mansion house, and the fine taste displayed in its once magnificent garden—the ruins of which, to this day, give us some idea of its former splendor.

It is remarked by Dr. Waterhouse, that in architectural taste and costly structure, Newport stood pre-eminent.—He says—“Where is there a structure now in New-England, that surpasses the Redwood Library? We have only to lament its perishable material. If you say that it was copied from an Athenian temple, still there is some credit due to them in selecting seventy years ago, and relishing so chaste a specimen of Grecian taste.”

The beautiful scenery, the delightful atmosphere, and the charms of literature and refinement, induced the cele-

brated Dean Berkley, afterward Bishop of Cloyne, to make this, in 1728, his residence for several years.— With a number of literary gentlemen, this learned prelate crossed the Atlantic, with a view of establishing a college in Bermudâ. But, perhaps, not readily finding that speck in the ocean, they found their way into our harbor.

It was here that distinguished and celebrated Divine is said to have written his “Minute Philosopher,” which will stand as an imperishable monument from age to age, of the intelligence, refinement, and piety of its author.— He purchased a farm not far from Newport, where he erected an elegant mansion, called White Hall, and which on his departure from this country, he presented with a library of nearly a thousand volumes, to Yale College.

Other literary institutions of New-England, have enrolled his name among their most munificent and liberal benefactors. It is said that the cup used in the communion service, by the Church in East Greenwich, belonged to Dean Berkley. He presented to Trinity Church, in Newport, an elegant and fine toned organ, which still remains in that edifice.

His exit from the toils of earth to the rewards of grace, was on Sabbath evening, January 14th, 1753, while engaged in family devotion, in the 69th year of his age.— “The memory of the just is blessed.”

The beautiful and enchanting scenery of the Island is a reason, perhaps, why so many of her sons in their youthful days, indulge in poetry and painting. Newport has been fertile in producing artists, some of whom stand in the foremost rank of their profession. The late Gilbert Stuart was a native of Rhode-Island, and is by the united voice of the civilized world, pronounced to have been the greatest painter of the human head, that the age in which he lived, produced—and, perhaps, of any other age.

The form and features of the father of our country,

the immortal Washington, from his pencil, will be transmitted to posterity, not only with truth and accuracy, but in a style of execution worthy of the subject—and that too, by a son of our own favored Isle—who, as an artist, whether foreign or native, was alone worthy of the honor.

Edward Malbone, another of her sons, has left an imperishable fame, as a miniature painter. It is said that when Mr. Malbone, who went to Europe for the purpose of improvement in his profession, was introduced to Mr. West, and produced specimens of his work, after examining them, that distinguished and celebrated artist inquired for what purpose he had come to England?—Mr. Malbone answered, to perfect himself in the art of painting. Mr. West replied, Sir, you can go home again, for a man who can paint such a picture as this, need not come to England for instruction.

Washington Allston received his first instructions as a painter, from Mr. Samuel King, late of Newport; and his propensity for painting, was probably cultivated by his residence during his boyish days, amidst the scenery of Newport, whence he had come from South Carolina, to attend the classical school in this place, kept by the late Robert Rogers. Charles B. King, now resident in Washington City, where, as a painter, he is much patronized, is also a native of Newport. And many of the youth of our Island, who have not engaged in this employment as a profession, in their early days have sketched and drawn and painted, until immersed in the cares and business of life, they have dropped the pencil, but still retain the taste.

William Claggett, a celebrated artist, although not a native, but an adopted son of Newport, where he spent more than twenty years of his life, deserves a place in the history of Rhode-Island. He came to this country from Wales, when about twelve years of age. He served his time as an apprentice at the clock-making business in Boston, where he remained until 1727, when he remov-

ed to Newport and commenced the business of his profession in this town. Many of his clocks are still remaining in the ancient dwellings of Newport.

Mr. Claggett is justly distinguished for his early and successful experiments on electricity. He constructed an electrical machine of such dimensions, as to occupy the principal part of one of the rooms of his house. At the request of several gentlemen of Boston, he carried his machine to that place, and such was the satisfaction of the people of that town with his experiments, (all of which were made for the benefit of the afflicted) that he received about £1500 in three weeks. He was intimately acquainted with the celebrated Dr. Benjamin Franklin, and it is said that when the Dr. visited Newport some time previous to Mr. Claggett's death, although he had made some electrical experiments by the friction of glass bars, yet this was the first machine of the kind he had ever seen. The Dr. was exceedingly interested in it, and was probably aided by it in his own future triumphant and successful experiments. Subsequently to the death of Mr. Claggett, and while Dr. Franklin was in Philadelphia, his son Thomas Claggett, desirous of setting up a machine on the plan improved by Dr. Franklin, and as a cylinder was not to be obtained in this part of the country, sent to the Dr. to procure one for him. His request was readily complied with by Franklin, who, when learning that it was for the son of his old friend, William Claggett, refused to accept the money sent for its purchase.

Mr. Claggett died on the 18th of October, 1749, in the 54th year of his age. He was a member of the First Baptist Church.

The harbor of Newport was occupied by the King's ships, for several years previous to the actual commencement of hostilities, for the purpose of enforcing the revenue laws and sustaining the authority of his Majesty over the Colony. But after the destruction of the sloop Liberty in our harbor, and as the hostility of the Colonies

to the acts of the British ministry began more fully to develope itself, their number was increased, until a whole squadron of ships of war, under command of Admiral Wallace, were stationed in our bay, to watch over his Majesty's subjects in Rhode-Island.

On the 19th of April, 1775, the dark elements of strife, which had been so long gathering, portentous of the storm of death, burst upon the Colonies in the battle of Lexington, where eight Americans were shot by the wanton cruelty of the British Commander, without the least provocation. This fired the Americans with indignation, and the battle of Bunker Hill, and the surrender of Ticonderoga to the American arms, followed each other in quick succession.

In May, of this year, a regiment was raised in the county of Newport, commanded by Col. Church, of Little Compton. Newport raised three companies, of sixty men each, commanded by John Topham, William Tew, and Ebenezer Flagg. Portsmouth raised one company, commanded by Jonathan Browning. This regiment marched to Boston and joined the American army at that place, during this and the following month, when this Island was guarded by the militia and minute-men.

Sept.—Admiral Wallace who commanded the British fleet in our harbor at this time, exciting the suspicion of the inhabitants, that he intended to remove from the south part of the Island a quantity of stock, several persons during the night went down and brought off about fifty head of cattle and one thousand sheep. A few days after this, Wallace removed some stock from the two lower farms on the Island, where it was supposed they had been collected for supplying his Majesty's troops at Boston. But the arrival of three hundred minute-men, who marched to the place and drove off the remaining cattle, prevented any more from being removed by the enemy. But this so enraged the British lion, that he threatened destruction to every thing around him, both

by sea and by land. He laid the town under contribution to supply the fleet with provisions, and urged his rigorous demands, by cutting off all supplies of fuel and provisions from the main, and by continued threats of cannonading the town. The menacing attitude of Wallace against the place, threw the inhabitants into the greatest agitation and distress, and about one half of the population left the town, and many the Island. Nearly all our principal merchants left, with their families and effects. Among these was Mr. Aaron Lopez, mentioned in another part of this discourse. He removed to and settled in Leicester, Mass. Mr. Lopez was afterward drowned in his carriage, in Scott's Pond, a few miles North of Providence.

A treaty was finally concluded between Wallace and the town of Newport, by consent of the State Government, and concurrence of the Continental Congress, then in session; who, unanimously recommended that in the present exigency, Newport should supply the fleet with beer and fresh provisions, as usual, and also the removal of the troops from the town, such being the conditions of the treaty, Wallace agreeing to remove his restrictions.

Many were of the opinion that Wallace dared not burn the town, and that his only object was to awe its inhabitants into compliance with his demands. On the 7th of October, he sailed up the river to Bristol, where he demanded three hundred sheep in sacrifice to his sacred Majesty, King George. But the inhabitants of that town not being satisfied of the divine right of his Majesty to make the demand, refused the sacrifice.— That evening about 8 o'clock, Wallace commenced a heavy cannonading of the town, and Governor Bradford's house, with several others, was burnt. The women and children, amidst the darkness and gloom of night, although the rain poured down in torrents, sought protection from their merciless invaders, in the open fields of the adjacent country. Wallace captured all American

vessels that came into port, and sent them to Boston, with their crews on board, and many of them never returned. About the last of November, he sailed out of the harbor, passed over to Conanicut, landed about two hundred marines, and burnt all the buildings at and in the neighborhood of the ferry. This wanton outrage in the destruction of property, was aggravated by the death of one of the inhabitants of the Island, who was shot while standing at his own door.

It is a well known fact in the history of those times, that little was ever effected by the blockading squadron of Wallace, except keeping the inhabitants in continual alarm, by threats and petty depredations on the adjacent Islands and neighborhoods. He landed on Prudence, and burnt and plundered the whole Island. He would also, when the weather was disagreeable and the walking bad, parade his vessel round the harbor, and up and down the river, for the purpose of harrassing our troops, in watching his motions, and following him by night and by day.

About this time a regiment was raised for this station, commanded by Col. Babcock. Gen. Lee was also sent from Boston to our assistance, by General Washington, with several companies of riflemen. He arrested all the tories he could find, imposed upon them the most severe restrictions, and soon after returned to Boston.

In the autumn of this year, a large number of the Rhode-Island troops stationed at Boston, embarked in Montgomery's expedition against Quebec, under command of Gen. Arnold. No expedition during the war, involved greater difficulties, or developed a more unconquerable spirit of perseverance than this. Their march through a trackless, unexplored wilderness, for more than three hundred miles, rendered their progress slow and difficult. They had swamps and woods, mountains and precipices to encounter, and what was still more appalling, their provisions failed them several days before they reached the habitation of man. To support life, they

were compelled to eat their dogs, shoes, &c. and when at one hundred miles from a human habitation, they divided their last morsel of bread. Many who sunk under the weight of their sufferings, were left to perish in the wilderness. And yet such was their unconquerable spirit of patriotism, that their fortitude remained unshaken. On the first of December, a siege was commenced upon Quebec, by the united forces of Arnold and Montgomery. At the expiration of the month, there being little prospect of effecting any thing by the siege, the bold and hazardous plan was adopted of attempting the place by scaling the walls. The attempt was to be made simultaneously in different parts of the town, by Montgomery and Arnold. The throwing of a rocket was the appointed signal, when the attack was made, and the work of death began.

The attempt proved unsuccessful, and fatal to the brave Gen. Montgomery, who fell at the onset, with two distinguished officers at his side. The fort assigned to Arnold was carried, and held in possession until the following morning, when a flag from Sir Guy Carlton, commander of the British forces at Quebec, informed them of the death of Gen. Montgomery, and the retreat of his army. It is said that that magnanimous commander, when the American prisoners were marched into the British barracks, expressed to our suffering troops the sympathies of a friend, rather than the cold austerities of an enemy—and that he supplied them with every convenience to render their condition comfortable.

Gen. Arnold was wounded in the action and carried from the field, when the command devolved on, and the fort was taken by Col. Morgan, a gallant and intrepid officer.

Gen. Arnold remained encamped during the winter, a few miles from Quebec, but the following spring not being reinforced, and his own forces being insufficient to attempt the reduction of the place, he retired, and by the

middle of June, the Americans had wholly evacuated Canada.

Wallace maintained the possession of our harbor until the spring of 1776. On the 6th of April, troops having been sent to our assistance from Providence, with two row-gallies of two eighteen pounders each, and while the fleet lay at anchor about a mile above Newport, Col. Babcock directed that two eighteen pounders be planted on an eminence near the shore, in open view of the enemy, and without any works to protect them. Here the intrepid Col. Elliot, together with the gallies under command of Commodore Grimes, soon rendered the situation of the cowardly Wallace extremely uncomfortable, and he abandoned the harbor, with his whole squadron. The Glasgow, of twenty guns, commanded by Captain Snow, returned to Newport, and came to anchor near Fort Island, having fallen in with, and received a severe chastisement from Admiral Hopkins, off Block Island.—The same evening, Colonel Richmond ordered several pieces of heavy artillery to be brought and placed on Brenton's Point, where a slight breastwork was thrown up during the night. The following morning he opened so vigorous and well-directed a fire upon her and the transport ship Snow, that they hastily cut their cables and went out to sea.

A few days subsequently, the British ship of war Scarborough, of twenty guns and two hundred and twenty-five men, with the Scymetar, of eighteen guns and one hundred and forty men, having with them two prize ships, put into our harbor and came to anchor a little to the South of Rose Island. A resolution was at once formed, to attempt the rescue of the prizes. The plan adopted was for Captain Hyers, of the Washington galley, to attack and hold the Scarborough at bay, while Captain Grimes, of the Spitfire galley, was to board and bring off the prizes. Col. Babcock had also made preparations, in case either of the ships should approach sufficiently near the North Battery or Brenton's Point,

to give them at those places a warm reception. About 11 o'clock at night, Captain Grimes came along side, and boarded and took the prize brig from under the stern of the man of war. The Scarborough immediately prepared to give chase, but was so annoyed and embarrassed in her course by Captain Hyers, that the brig was brought safely to harbor, and the Scarborough within reach of the North Battery ; when Col. Babcock poured upon her such an incessant flood of balls, together with the well-directed and galling fire of the Washington galley, as entirely to arrest her progress and prevent further pursuit. At that moment, the prize sloop was sailing with the intention of getting under the protecting wing of the Scarborough, but was disappointed by the intrepidity of Captain Grimes, who cut her off, boarded, and sent her to Providence.

The British ships having both received a severe chastisement, the Scarborough from the North Battery and the Washington galley, and the Scymetar from the Battery at Brenton's Point and the Spitfire galley, Captain Grimes, came to anchor between Connanicut and Rose Island. But this position was as unpropitious as the former, for a battery was opened and the storm of death soon came down upon them from the shores of Connanicut ; so that finding no safety in our harbor, and danger threatening whichever way they fly, they deemed it the better part of valor to abandon their position by a hasty and inglorious retreat. But in leaving our harbor, they had another fiery ordeal to pass, both at Brenton's Point and Castle Hill, where they received a severe and vigorous cannonade from the American batteries at those places. The ships returned the fire with great rage, and departed in mortification and disgrace. During these eight or ten days of almost incessant and successful struggles, the Americans had only one man slightly wounded.

During this season a number of privateers were fitted out from this town and Providence, which captured from fifty to one hundred valuable prizes, which were sent to Providence, New-London, &c.

Early in the fall, intelligence was received that a large British fleet and army were soon expected to arrive, to take possession of the Island. All the cattle the American commander could collect, probably one half on the Island, were driven to Howland's Ferry, and swam over the river, to prevent their falling into the hands of the enemy.

In December, the British fleet and army arrived, under the conduct of Sir Peter Parker. The American force being altogether insufficient to make any effectual resistance, retreated from the Island, and many of the inhabitants left at the same time. The fleet ran up the west side of Connanicut, crossed over from the north point of that Island, and landed their troops in Middletown, about four and a half miles from Newport. The British army consisted of about eight or ten thousand men, English and Hessians, of each about an equal number, commanded by Gen. Clinton and Lord Percy. They marched up and encamped on Gould's and Weaver's hill, except a few, who landed at Coddington's cove and marched into Newport.

When the fleet arrived here, there were two new Rhode-Island frigates, called the Warren and the Providence, lying in our harbor, with eight or ten privateers, which all got under way and run up the river. Both frigates and privateers, however, during the winter, taking advantage of the North East wind, made their escape and went to sea, notwithstanding the utmost vigilance with which every passage was guarded by the British fleet; demonstrating the importance of our bay, and proving the impossibility of its being closely blockaded.

As soon as the army landed, they commenced plundering the inhabitants; sheep, fowls, stacks of hay, and every thing else they could plunder, went off as by the hand of magic, the first night.

After having remained in camp for one week, the barrack officer went through the neighborhood, surveying every house, and unceremoniously quartering in each,

from ten to forty and forty-five men, according to the size and convenience of the house. They remained quartered on the inhabitants until May following, when they again returned to camp. About this time, several thousand of the British troops left Rhode-Island for New-York, under command of Gen. Clinton and Lord Percy. The command then devolved on Gen. Prescott.

Prescott was a haughty, tyrannical commander, and actuated by principles and habits purely aristocratical.—He was illy qualified to cultivate the friendship of his enemies, or perpetuate the affection and strengthen the confidence of his friends.*

* His constant habit while walking the streets, if he saw any of the inhabitants conversing together, was to shake his cane at them, and say, "disperse, ye rebels." He was also in the habit when he met the citizens in the streets, of commanding them to take off their hats, and unless instantly complied with, they were removed by a gentle rap of the General's cane. One evening, as the General was passing out of town to his quarters, he overtook a Quaker, who not feeling so much reverence for his Majesty's officer, as to doff his hat, the General pressed upon him with his courser until he pinned him against the wall, knocked off his hat, and then put him under guard.

Gen. Prescott caused many of the citizens of Newport to be arrested and detained in prison, some of them for months, without any charge, or any assigned reason, whatever. Among the number thus detained, was a Mr. Allen. He was in jail for several months, without ever knowing his particular offence. While stationed here, the General and officers were in the habit of giving large and splendid parties, to which, many of the first families in Newport were invited. One evening, during one of those splendid festivals, the conversation turned upon the prisoners then in jail; when a young lady of the company inquired of the General in what Mr. Allen had particularly offended, that he was detained in prison so long. After considerable conversation respecting the family of Mr. Allen, for which the young lady expressed the deepest sympathy, and just before the company separated, the General approached his fair friend, who had so eloquently plead the cause of her injured neighbor, and gave her a pledge that Mr. Allen, for her sake, should be released the following morning—sealing that pledge by impressing a kiss on the young lady's hand. The General kept his word.

Another person, long incarcerated in prison without any specific offence, was Mr. William Tripp, of Broad-street, a worthy and respectable citizen. Mr. Tripp had a large and interesting family, but was not permitted to hold any correspondence with them, either written or verbal. The first intelligence he received of them, after his imprisonment, was by a letter baked in a loaf of bread. A cor-

In July, 1777, Col. Barton, of Providence, conceived and executed one of the most bold and hazardous enterprises recorded in the history of the revolution. At this time Gen. Prescott quartered about five miles from Newport, on the west road, leading to the Ferry, at the house of a Mr. Overing. Barton's design was, to pass over to Rhode-Island from the main, seize Prescott at his quarters, and carry him to the American camp. This enterprise, although hazardous in the extreme, was planned with cool deliberation and consummate prudence. Having chosen several officers in whom he could repose the most unlimited confidence, he selected about forty men, whom he knew well understood rowing, and on whose valor he could rely in the most perilous exigency.

At this time, there were three British frigates, the Lark, the Diamond and the Juno, lying with their guard boats out, on the East side of Prudence. On the 10th of the month, at about nine o'clock in the evening, the Colonel with his company embarked on board their boats from Warwick Neck, and with muffled oars passed over to Rhode-Island, between Prudence and Patience. As they passed the South end of Prudence, they heard from the guard boats of the enemy, the sentinel's cry, "All's well." As they landed, Barton divided his men into several divisions, assigning to each their station, when they advanced toward the house, preserving the strictest order, and the most profound silence. They passed the

respondence, by this means, was kept up with his family during the remainder of his imprisonment, which was until the British evacuated the Island. During his confinement in jail, his wife sought an interview with the General, with the intention of becoming an intercessor for the liberation of her husband, or at least, that she might be permitted to visit him in prison. She applied to a Captain Savage, through whom alone an audience with the General could be obtained, and inquired if she could be admitted to his presence. She was directed to call the following day, when the inhuman Savage answered that she could have no interview with the General, and that he expected her husband would be hung in less than one week, as a rebel, shutting the door violently against her.

British guard house from 80 to 100 rods on the left, and a company of light horse, about an equal distance on the right.

One of the divisions was directed by a circuitous course to advance upon the house in the rear, and secure the doors, while Barton with the other division was to advance up in front of the house, through the gate. As they approached the gate, the sentinel, who stood a few yards from them, cries, "Who comes there?" Not readily receiving an answer, he hailed the second time, and demanded the countersign; when Barton sternly replies, "We have no countersign to give; have you seen any deserters to-night?" This had the intended effect. They still advanced upon him, Barton still demanding with greater vehemence, "Have you seen any deserters?" so that he never suspected them as foes, until his musket was seized, and he was told the least noise, and he was a dead man.

The other division had already taken possession of and secured the doors, so that egress from it by its inmates, was impossible. Col. Barton, with several others, unceremoniously entered the house, and after some little interruption of the family, by a hasty visit to several apartments, ascended the stairs leading to the General's sleeping room. In the mean time, Major Barrington, aid to Gen. Prescott, finding the house attacked, leaped out of a window, intending to seek security in flight; but by the time he reached the ground, was secured a prisoner. At the moment Barton entered the General's room, he sprung from his bed and seized his gold watch hanging on the wall; but Col. Barton placing his hand on his shoulder, told him he was his prisoner, and that silence was his only safety. Gen. Prescott requested permission to dress, but was told by Barton that their business required haste, and that he could only have time to wrap his cloak around him. For security, and in order that the General might keep time with the light hearts and quick step of the Colonel's party, he was compelled to

walk between two officers, with one arm resting on the shoulders of each, while Major Barrington and the sentinel were stationed in the centre of the party.

They passed through a barley field a few rods North of where Mr. Peleg Coggeshall's barn now stands, and but a short distance from the guard house. When they arrived at the boats, Gen. Prescott was permitted to dress, when he was seated in the boat commanded by Col. B. Prescott implicitly obeyed the injunction of silence, until they had passed for some distance the British ships. And as they landed at Warwick Neck, he turns to Col. Barton and says, "Sir, you have made a bold push to-night." Barton replies, "We have been fortunate." Col. Elliot was soon there with a coach to receive and convey him to Providence, where himself, with Col. Barton and prisoner arrived early in the morning.

Prescott was afterwards exchanged for Gen. Lee, who had fallen into the hands of the enemy, and at the close of the same year, or the beginning of the next, he again took command of the British forces on Rhode-Island, where he remained until its final evacuation.

In September, 1777, a secret expedition against Rhode-Island was concerted by Gen. Spencer, commander in chief of the American forces in Rhode-Island. The Americans were stationed in Tiverton, near where the stone bridge now is. By some means, however, the British commander was apprized of Spencer's intention, and made preparations for his reception. He directed several dams to be thrown across the brook, running from the North through the land of William Bailey, Southward to Easton's pond, which raised the water to the depth of three or four feet all through that valley. It is said the British intended to permit them to land and march up without opposition, then destroy their boats and cut off their retreat. The expedition was, however, abandoned, even after the troops had embarked on board their boats. The certain cause of its failure is yet unknown.

In October, a flag arrived at Newport, from Providence, bearing the joyful intelligence of the surrender of Gen. Burgoyne and army to the American forces. A knowledge of this event had reached the Island, and was known by certain individuals two days previous to its public announcement, by the arrival of the flag.

During the whole time the British had possession of the Island, a correspondence was maintained between certain individuals of the Island and the main at Little-Compton, so that the American officers were constantly apprized of the general movements of the enemy, while in possession of Rhode-Island.

This correspondence was maintained, by signals given on the Island, indicating a clear coast, and that a messenger could pass over in safety, after dark. The first signal was the leaving down of a certain pair of bars, which, with a spy-glass, could be distinctly seen from the main. Afterwards, for fear of exciting the suspicion of the enemy, the signal was changed, when an open window of Mr. Peleg Peckham's barn, answered the same purpose.

A small vault in the ground, near the shore, and at no great distance from Mr. Peckham's, covered with a flat stone, served as a depository of communication.—Here, letters and papers were regularly deposited and removed, by the respective individuals engaged in the correspondence. It was through this medium of communication, the intelligence of Burgoyne's surrender first reached the Island. It is said that the paper bringing this intelligence, and which was found safely deposited in the vault, is still preserved in the family of a Mr. Barker, on the Island.

That part of the British army now in possession of the Island, consisted of the 22d regiment, commanded by Col. Campbell; the 43d, by Col. Marsh; the 54th, by Col. Bruce; and the 63d, by Major Sill. The artillery was commanded by Col. Ennis. The Hessian regiments were, the Heno, the Beno, the Dedford, and Lanscraft, deriving their names from their respective commanders.

There was also a company of light horse attached to the army, with a regiment of refugees, commanded by Col. Fanning. There were also a few companies attached to the army, called Soushears and Anspaks; these were Germans.

In the spring of 1778, Gen. Sullivan having been appointed to the command of the American troops in Rhode-Island, the British commander at Newport, anticipating an attempt upon the Island by the Americans, sent a detachment of 500 men up the river, to destroy their boats, and by this means frustrate the anticipated expedition. They landed on the morning of the 25th of May, at daylight, between Warren and Bristol, and proceeded in two divisions, one for Warren, and the other for the head of Kickemuet river, "where they destroyed about seventy flat bottomed boats, and set fire to one of the State galleys." They also burnt a large quantity of pitch, tar, plank, and other property belonging to the Americans at that place.

The party which proceeded to Warren, after having burnt the meeting-house and a number of dwelling houses, plundering and robbing the inhabitants, not even the females excepted, (these were robbed of their shoe-buckles, gold rings, handkerchiefs, &c.,) joined the other division and made a descent on Bristol, where they burnt twenty-two dwelling houses, and by mistake, the Episcopal Church, instead of the meeting-house.

A few days subsequently, a body of one hundred and fifty men were sent to burn the mills, and other buildings around it, at Tiverton. They burnt the old mill and another building at the landing, but in proceeding to the town, the place of their intended plunder, their progress was arrested at the bridge, by a Spartan band of twenty-five men, who had planted themselves here, and disputed their passage. Nor were they able to carry the bridge, although frequently attempted, and were compelled to return without effecting the object of their plunder.

In July, 1778, the French fleet of eleven sail of line

ships, besides frigates and transports, under the command of Count D'Estaing, appeared off the harbor, to the great joy of the inhabitants, and anchored near to Brenton's reef. One of the ships of the fleet run up the west side of Connanicut and anchored at the North point of the Island. The three British frigates above mentioned, lay at anchor on the East side of Prudence. A few mornings after, they weighed anchor and sailed with the design of getting under protection of the battery, at Tammany Hill. The French ship, aware of their intention, got under way at the same time, and cut them off.

The frigates then stood in for the shore, and were run aground about five or six miles from Newport, on the west side of Rhode-Island. Before they grounded, they cut away the masts, for the purpose of driving them nearer the shore, and as soon as they struck, they set them on fire and made for the shore in their boats. During this time the French ship was sufficiently near to have thrown grape shot over them, yet when she saw them fire and abandon their vessels, she retired and took her former position, without firing a gun.

A number of British vessels lying at Coddington Cove, were also set on fire as soon as the burning of the frigates was discovered. The Grand Duke, lying a little to the North of Long-wharf, with several other vessels, was burnt. The Falcon and the Flora, frigates, were sunk; the latter at Fort Walcott wharf, and they were never afterward able to float her. About a year after the British evacuated the Island, and the Americans took possession, the Flora was floated, fitted for sea, and sent to France. About the same time the frigates were burnt in the harbor and along the shore, the King Fisher, a man of war, was burnt in the East Passage.

The French fleet, after lying at anchor for several days, run up the middle passage and anchored under Gould Island. They run up under three top-sails, and received the fire of the British batteries as they passed, but returned it with such warmth, that they soon silenced

the forts. Several shot from the French fleet, were unintentionally thrown into the town.

As soon as the fleet approached the harbor, the British troops commenced burning the houses about two miles from Newport. Commencing from the house now owned by George Irish, Esq. they burnt every house on the West road, for the distance of a mile; on the East road about half that distance, and from the West road to the shore.

A few days previous to this, the British commander*

* At the same time, a party principally refugees, was employed and sent out through the Island, headed by one William Crosson, who cut and destroyed every cart wheel, waggons, and carriages of all descriptions, grindstones, scythes, axes, hatchets, and every other edged tool they could find, and filled up many of the wells. Crosson's deeds of darkness were perpetrated during the night, and were not confined to the limits of the Island, but often extended as far as Swansey-Neck, Little-Compton, and Fall-River—plundering the inhabitants of every thing he could bring off in his boat, and frequently, not even sparing the citizens themselves. In one of his midnight excursions, he seized and brought off a worthy and respectable citizen of Swansey-Neck, by the name of Slade, who died of the small pox on board the British prison-ship in our harbor. And many others who had the misfortune to fall into his hands, never after were permitted to return.

Crosson's character had become so notorious, and public indignation so excited, that measures were taken for his apprehension.—But securely sheltered under the protecting wing of British power by day, no prospect of his capture appeared, unless it could be effected when engaged in his depredations at night. Accordingly, a boat was fitted out at Little-Compton, called a shaving mill, commanded by Lemuel Bailey of that town, for his capture. Nor was it long before he found himself a prisoner. He was conveyed to Providence under a strong guard, but when he arrived there, such was the public feeling of indignation against him, that with great difficulty the guard could protect him from popular violence.

After having been in prison for several months in that town, by some means (supposed to be by the influence of a bribe) he escaped from jail and again appeared in Newport. When the British evacuated the Island, Crosson went off with them, and probably considered it safe to remain with them, as he never afterwards returned to Newport.

Among the reckless associates of Crosson, was a man by the name of Gouldsbrough. He landed his party at Little-Compton, one evening, near the place where a lad by the name of Taggart, son of Judge William Taggart, Sen. and brother of the late Judge Taggart, of Middletown, was stationed as a sentinel. The inhuman Gouldsbrough seized and murdered young Taggart on the spot.

had seized and drove within the lines, all the stock, cows, oxen, &c., he could find on the Island. Sheep, there were none, having all been previously stolen.

The same day, (at night) on which the French fleet came in, the British withdrew their troops from the North end of the Island, and took up their position on the heights, about two miles from Newport. Their line extended from Coddington's Cove to Easton's beach; the whole distance being defended by breast works and redoubts. Beside which, they had a line still nearer the town, running from the West of the North mill, down to the house now occupied by Mr. Joseph Perry, on the Gibbs estate.

On the following morning, the American army landed on the North end of the Island, without opposition, and took possession of the neighboring heights. The army was composed of militia, continental troops, and volunteers, commanded by Generals Sullivan, Green, Glover, and the Marquis de La Fayette, supposed to number from ten to fifteen thousand men.

On the afternoon of the same day that the Americans landed on the Island, the British fleet of twenty-five sail, was discovered standing in for Newport. They came to off Point Judith, for the night, but a sudden change of wind favoring the Count the following morning, he stood out to sea with his whole squadron. Lord Howe, after some unsuccessful manœuvring to get the weather-gage of the French fleet, put to sea, followed by Count D'Estaing, and both fleets were soon lost sight of in the distance. The storm which had already commenced, continued to rage with increasing violence for several days, so that no general action was obtained between the fleets.—Both, however, were greatly damaged by the storm.

The Languedoc, of ninety guns, commanded by Count D'Estaing, had neither masts nor bowsprit standing, and several others were in a similar situation. The American troops encamped on the North part of the Island, suffered

not less than the ships. Such was the violence of the tempest, attended with a powerful rain, that by the night of the 12th, not a tent or marquee remained standing.—Many horses and several of the soldiers perished by the severity of the storm, and the whole army was in the most wretched and deplorable condition. And in addition to their own personal sufferings, the greater part of their ammunition was either destroyed or greatly damaged by the storm.

The 14th, the storm having subsided and the day being serene and warm, the American army spent in drying their clothes, &c., and in making ready for their future operations. On the following morning, they took up their line of march in three several divisions: one on the East road, one on the West, and the third through the centre of the Island, and possessed themselves of the heights, about one and a half miles from the British lines. Gen. Sullivan quartered about five miles from Newport, at what is now called the Gibbs farm. Gen. de La Fayette quartered on the East side of the Island, at what was then called the Boller garden farm, about the same distance from Newport. Gen. Green quartered in Middletown, on the farm now owned by Col. Richard K. Randolph, of this town.

The British had thrown up a large fort, the remains of which are still visible a little to the North and East of the house of George Irish, Esq. and directly opposite on Honeyman's hill, at a distance of a little more than a mile, the Americans had thrown up a fort and other works, and by the 20th, they had opened two four gun batteries; and by the 23d, had mounted seventeen pieces of heavy artillery, two ten inch mortars, and three five and a half inch howitzers.

From these works, on either side, was kept up a continual cannonading by day, and throwing of bombs by night, by which many were killed on both sides. No intelligence was received and nothing was known of the

disabled and wrecked condition of the fleets, until about a week after the storm, when the French fleet was seen at a distance, standing for Newport.

At 7 o'clock, P. M., the Marquis de La Fayette, and other officers, went on board to consult with the French officers, on measures for the vigorous and successful prosecution of the expedition, and prevail with them immediately to enter the harbor. But their efforts were without success, and about 12 at night, they left the ships and returned on shore. The conduct of the Count, in refusing a compliance with the request of the American officers, when conquest appeared so easy and victory so sure, was most severely censured. But when it is considered that his instructions were positive from the Court of France, in case of disaster, and that his officers unanimously signed a protest against entering the harbor in their disabled condition, this censure, at least in a very great degree, must appear to have been unmerited and severe.

The militia raised for this expedition, were drafted only for three weeks; one half of which, were on service, and the remainder were to hold themselves in readiness to succeed these at the expiration of that time, if called for. Within twenty-four hours after the French fleet sailed for Boston, between two and three thousand volunteers from Boston and other parts of New-England, left the army and returned home. And many of the militia, whose term of service had now expired, returned, while those that were to succeed them, came on with reluctance, and not more than half their number was ever supplied; so that the American army was greatly reduced.

In this situation, without a naval force to protect or succor them, the possibility of a successful retreat was now the only desideratum. But it was deemed prudent, not hastily to abandon their present position, lest they should thus encourage the pursuit of their foes, and hazard the honor of a successful retreat. They still maintained their post, until the night of the 28th, when about

12 o'clock, the army began to move toward the North. It had been decided in a council of war, to retreat to the North end of the Island, secure a communication with the main, and wait until information should be received from the French fleet in Boston.

Gen. de La Fayette was dispatched with a message to Count D'Estaing, to ascertain whether the assistance and co-operation of the fleet could be expected, and to solicit its speedy return. The Count could not consent that the fleet should return, but promptly offered to march his troops from Boston, to the assistance of the American forces on Rhode-Island, if requested. At day-light, the retreat having been discovered by the British, they took up their march in pursuit.

About six miles from Newport, the regiment in advance, commanded by Col. Campbell, was separated in two divisions and pressed forward in pursuit, one division retaining the road, the other the open field to the left.— They advanced without opposition or obstruction, until they approached a wall running from the West a little to the North of Sampson Sherman's house. Here the Americans had lying in ambush under the wall, a piquet guard of between three and four hundred men, who were not discovered by the enemy, and who were ordered not to fire, until the word was given by the commander; again load and fire with the greatest possible expedition, and then continue their retreat.

The orders were strictly obeyed, and the command to fire was not given, until the enemy were within half gun shot, when they poured upon them such a flood of death, as not only to check the advancing foe, but throw them into the utmost confusion, giving the guard sufficient time again to fire and make their retreat, with but very little loss.

Col. Campbell had several balls pass through his clothes, and his horse killed under him. At one of the field pieces, every man was shot down at the first fire.— In the rear and at a distance of not more than half a

mile, the fifty-fourth and two Hessian regiments were advancing, but so unexpected and fatal had been the work of that moment, and so rapid the retreat of the assailants, that they arrived too late to render their dying companions the least assistance.

The main body of the American army had gained and taken possession of Butts' hill, on the Northern part of the Island. It has generally been supposed, even at this time, had Gen. Green's advice been taken, a most signal victory might have been achieved, over the pursuing enemy. His advice was overruled, however, and the enemy pressed onward toward the American lines.

They advanced near the left wing of the American army, but were repulsed and driven back by General Glover, when they retired and took possession of Quaker hill, about a mile from the position occupied by the Americans. A continual skirmishing was kept up between the two armies, during this and the following day, and frequently whole regiments were engaged in the deadly strife at once, and the same spot of ground was frequently taken possession of, and abandoned by both belligerent parties.

The last and most severe skirmish during the action, was an attempt made by the British on a redoubt, in possession of the Americans. A reinforcement was sent to their relief, who arrived just in time to prevent the success of the enemy, and just as they were making a third and desperate effort to carry the redoubt. They were repulsed with considerable loss, and in great confusion precipitately retreated, leaving many of their slain and wounded on the field of battle. After this action, the firing of the musquetry ceased, but the firing of the artillery still continued on both sides.

One grand object of the American commander in planting himself on these heights, and of maintaining so long, the sanguinary conflict, was to secure the removal of the baggage and heavy stores of war, which was briskly going on in the rear, while the roar of cannon and the

storm of death were raging in the front. The sentinels of both armies were stationed at a distance of not more than seventy rods from each other, so that it required no small degree of generalship to cover the design of retreat from the suspicion of a watchful enemy, and render that retreat triumphant and successful.

On the 30th of the month, a number of tents were built in full view of the enemy, and the whole army were apparently engaged in fortifying and strengthening their present position. After the going down of the sun, they built a large number of fires, extending nearly across the Island, to lull the enemy into security, and cover from suspicion their intended retreat.

As soon as the surrounding darkness favored the design, the tents were struck, and the troops with the artillery, horses and stores of war, moved to the North, embarked in their flat bottomed boats, and were all safely landed on the main, before the dawn of day. The brave and generous de La Fayette, who returned from Boston at the moment our troops were landing, was very greatly disappointed in not having been permitted to share the perils of the action. Anticipating such an event, he had rode the distance of seventy miles in about six hours.—Nor could he be prevented from passing over to bring off the piquet and other parties, which covered the American retreat.

This he effected with such consummate prudence and self-possession, that not a man was left behind, nor the slightest loss sustained. This retreat, notwithstanding the failure of the expedition, reflected the highest honor on the American commanders, and the wisdom and skill by which it was executed, was applauded even by the British officers themselves.

The British held possession of the Island until the autumn of 1779, when Sir Henry Clinton, at New-York, anticipating an attack upon that place by the combined forces of America and France, dispatched a number of transports to bring off the troops from Rhode-Island, to

strengthen his forces at New-York. They embarked on the 25th of October, and arrived at New-York on the 27th. On the day the Island was evacuated, orders were issued by the British Commander, that the inhabitants of Newport should keep within their houses during the time the royal troops were passing through the streets, to the place of their embarkation, on penalty of death.— This injunction was strictly complied with, so that those who had the curiosity to see the invaders of their peaceful shores march through the streets, stole a glance at them through the crevices of their windows and doors.— They burnt all the barracks at Fort Adams, and the light house at Beaver-tail. They carried off with them the town records, consisting of the books of registry of deeds, the records of the town-council, the court of probate, &c. which in their passage to New-York, were unfortunately sunk with the vessel which carried them away, near Hurl Gate, and were under water for several hours, before they were recovered. When they were afterward returned to Newport, they were in a damaged condition ; but had they been copied immediately on their recovery, many valuable documents might have been preserved.— But having been neglected, they are now in a dilapidated and ruined state, and of very little use.

The possession of the Island for three years, by a strong and powerful foe, who treated its inhabitants as rebels against the authority of their King, and consequently claiming the divine right of his Majesty, to whatever the royal troops should please to possess, reduced the inhabitants to the greatest poverty and distress..

During that period, they had cut down and consumed all the flourishing groves of forest trees, with many of the most valuable orchards, and numerous ornamental trees, which beautified and adorned the Island, so that the inhabitants were entirely destitute of fuel. The winter, also, of 1779–80, was one of the most severe in the memory of man. The rivers were frozen over from the Island to the main, and the people of Newport were re-

duced to the greatest distress. Wood in the winter of 1779-80, was sold in this town at the enormous price of \$20 per cord. In addition to the distress occasioned by the scarcity of fuel, provisions were also equally scarce, the crops having been either destroyed or greatly damaged by the preceding August storm; so that corn was sold at four silver dollars per bushel, and potatoes at two dollars per bushel. To relieve the wants of the suffering poor, a tax of £2,000, lawful money, was voted for the purchase of corn; and donations were also solicited from other towns. Tiverton made a donation of wood, and other towns of provisions.

During the possession of the Island by the British, the freemen of Newport had held their town-meetings for choice of representatives in General Assembly, in Providence, agreeably to an act of that body, granting them permission to do so. Middletown and Portsmouth held their town-meetings in Tiverton, for the same purpose.— But after the evacuation of the Island by the enemy, the General Assembly passed an act empowering the town of Newport to resume their corporate powers and choose town officers, providing every person should be excluded from voting, who had in any wise aided the enemy.— The first meeting of the freemen for the choice of officers, was held at the Friends' meeting house, Nov. 1779.

On the 10th of July, 1780, the French fleet of seven sail of the line and five frigates, with a large number of transports, and an army of six thousand men, arrived at Newport, to the great joy of the inhabitants. The fleet was commanded by the Chevalier de Ternay, and the army by Lieut. Count de Rochambeau. The town was illuminated, and the arrival of the fleet and army greeted with the fullest demonstrations of gratitude and joy.— Complimentary addresses were made by a committee of the General Assembly, then in session, both to Admiral de Ternay, and Count de Rochambeau, to which they gave the most spirited and patriotic replies.

In July, it having been ascertained that a large naval

and land force were destined against this town, the inhabitants associated and formed themselves into companies, both for the common defence, and also that the disaffected might be known. The town was divided into four districts, and by a vote of the freemen, the inhabitants were required to meet and sign articles of association; and those who should not appear at the places designated in the several districts, were to be deemed as enemies of their country; and all persons refusing to take up arms against the enemy, were to be sent out of town.—It was voted that a copy of the list of disaffected persons ordered to be forwarded to the council of war, be also sent to Gen. Heath, that if the British fleet and army arrive before any return is received from the council of war, he may know what persons the town requests should be removed from the Island. The list sent to the council of war, was called the “Black list,” embracing the vote of the town, that such persons be sent immediately from the Island, as inimical to the United States. The militia from Connecticut and Massachusetts were ordered to the defence of Rhode-Island. The expedition was however abandoned by Sir Henry Clinton, even after having sailed from New-York with a large fleet, and an army of eight thousand men, as far as Huntington Bay, on Long-Island, much to the disappointment and grief of our magnanimous allies, who were prepared to give him a most warm and hearty reception.

The Admiral de Ternay died soon after his arrival at Newport, and was buried with military honors, in Trinity Church yard, where a slab on the North side of the Church, was afterward erected to his memory.

In March, 1781, General Washington arrived at Newport. He passed over from the main, by Conanicut ferry, and landed from his barge at the head of Long-wharf. As he passed the French fleet lying back of the fort, they fired a salute, and the army was drawn up in order for his reception at the Long-wharf.—They formed in two lines extending from the house

of William Vernon, Esq. at the South end of Clark-street, to the Parade, thence to the West end of Long-wharf. Washington marched up between the two lines, receiving the warmest congratulations of his fellow-citizens, and the same honors from his generous allies, which they said they paid their king. The town was illuminated the evening after his arrival at Newport. This was the first interview he had enjoyed with the French officers, and it is said, here Washington and Count D'Rochambeau laid their plans for an attack upon New-York, which was disconcerted by the arrival of a large fleet and army to the assistance of Sir Henry Clinton, under the command of Admiral Rodney.

About this time, Admiral D'Barras arrived at Boston, and succeeded to the command of the French squadron at Newport. It was soon after decided in a council of war, held at Weathersfield, Con., by General Washington, Count D'Rochambeau and other distinguished officers, that the troops on Rhode-Island (with the exception of about five hundred to guard the works,) should immediately march for the North River, to join the American army.

During the whole period the French army was quartered in Newport, such was their strict regard to the rights and property of the inhabitants, that the whole amount of damage done by them, would not exceed one hundred dollars.

The surrender of Lord Cornwallis and army to the united forces of America and France, on the 19th of October, 1781, decided the destiny of the revolution, and was virtually the close of the war. For although several places of importance were still in the possession of the enemy, yet their days were numbered, and their destiny sealed. On the 4th of March, 1782, the British Parliament in the House of Commons passed a resolution, declaring all as enemies to his Majesty and his Majesty's kingdom, who should advise to the longer continuance of the war in America. Preliminaries of peace

were entered into at Paris, in Nov. 1782, and a definitive treaty, in which Great Britain acknowledged the sovereignty and independence of the United States, was signed in September, 1783.

During the war of the revolution, although Newport being in possession of the enemy, had but few privateers engaged in the deadly strife, still she furnished a number of distinguished naval commanders, and a greater number of marines, perhaps, than any other town in New-England, in proportion to her size and population.

It is supposed by those who lived in times that tried men's souls, that Newport probably furnished a thousand men for the naval service in that war, and that one half of these fell into the hands of the enemy, and died on board a man of war, the *Fortune* prison in England, or the old Jersey prison-ship, which for the loathsomeness and terror of its dungeons, compared with the Black Hole of Calcutta.

The naval commanders in that war, were John Grimes, Benjamin Pierce, Joseph Gardiner, William Dennis, James Godfrey, Remembrance Simmons, Thomas Stacy, Oliver Read, Capt. Bently, Samuel Jeffers, John Coggschalle, William Finch, Capt. Jaquays, James Phillips, Ezekiel Boroughs, John Murphy, Isaac Freeborn, William Ladd, Joseph Sheffield, and Capt. Gazzee. These either sailed from Newport previous to its possession by the enemy, or subsequently, from other ports of New-England, the West Indies, &c.

The privateers, though small in numerical power and force, yet they constantly annoyed the enemy, took many valuable prizes, and achieved some splendid victories.—Capt. Oliver Read, of this town, justly deserves a place in the history of those times. No sooner was intelligence received that the invaders of his country had commenced their march of death in the environs of Boston, than he left the peaceful retirement of home, and hastened to the rescue. He offered his services to his country as a volunteer, and joined the American troops

in the neighborhood of Boston. But the dull monotony of the camp was neither suited to the character nor habits of Capt. Read. He soon left the army and sailed as the commander of a privateer.

His bold adventurous spirit exposed him to great dangers, and during the continuance of the war, he was often in the power of his foes. But the same merciful Providence which watched over and directed the destiny of that event, watched over and preserved this bold and fearless patriot. After having been several times taken prisoner, and suffered some ungentlemanly treatment from his foes, he solemnly protested, if ever he commanded another vessel, to make atonement for the insults received. He was no sooner released from his confinement, than his friends purchased and fitted him a new and well built brig, called the *Rochambeau*. In this brig, Capt. Read achieved several victories, and took many valuable prizes. But he was destined to see his favorite brig in the possession of his foes, and himself again a prisoner of war by the chicanery of one of his youthful companions, who was a loyalist; or in the common parlance of that age, a tory. Capt. Read and his companions were carried to New-York, and from thence transferred to the Jersey prison-ship.

In the floating dungeons of this *Aceldama*, where disease and death reigned throughout every apartment, Capt. Read resolved not to remain without attempting his escape, if he perished in the attempt. He communicated his designs to several of his fellow prisoners.—Capt. Isaiah Cahoone and Capt. John Tower, of Providence, with one or two others, who, with the same daring intrepidity, resolved to share the fate of Capt. Read. The only plan of escape which afforded the least hope of success, was to seize the boat of the prison-ship, and make their escape under the guns of the vessel.

This plan, hazardous and full of danger as it was, was finally agreed upon, and they waited only for an opportunity to offer itself, when, at a concerted signal, they were

to attempt its execution. After waiting with impatience for several days, Providence seemed to smile upon their design, and grant them a favorable opportunity of attempting their escape. Just before night, the boat of the prison-ship returned from shore, and unloaded her stores of provision, when, at the given signal of Capt. Read, his companions leaped after him into the boat, cut away her ropes and made for the shore, amidst a shower of balls.

The darkness of night and the violence of a snow storm, which at that time commenced, prevented the pursuit of their enemies, and they fortunately landed on Long Island, during the night. Capt. Read soon returned to Newport, with a heart burning with indignation, especially against his old school fellow, Crandall, the tory. It is said that when Read was delivered by Crandall, to the officers of the Jersey prison-ship, he cast a withering look at that reckless being, and says, "A short life to one of us. If we meet again, and meet again we shall, one of us dies."

Capt. Read was soon in command of another vessel, of about an equal force with the Rochambeau, which was now commanded by the infamous Crandall. It was not long before she was descried, although newly painted and disguised. Read prepared for action, and as he approached her, hoisted American colors; being hailed, he answered by a broad-side, and at the same time, showed himself to the astonished Crandall, who supposed him safely lodged in the Jersey prison-ship.

The conflict lasted for several hours, until almost every man on board the Rochambeau, was either slain or wounded. And when taken possession of, the lion heart even of Capt. Read, was deeply affected. There lay the headless body of the treacherous Crandall, surrounded by his fallen companions, while the deck was literally covered with human gore. Capt. Read again entered his native port, accompanied by his favorite Rochambeau.—The brig was immediately repaired and fitted for sea, when her bold commander again sailed on another cruise.

Capt. Read having learned off Sandy Hook, that the brig *Spy*, of Providence, had been taken by his Majesty's ship *Lion*, of 64 guns, and ordered to Newport, resolved, if possible, to retake her.

Accordingly, he moored his vessel in safety, and kept on the look out, near the Hook. The *Spy* soon came in sight under British colors, cast anchor, and waited for a pilot. Capt. Read with a few brave fellows to man his boat, came along side and offered his services as a pilot to conduct them to New-York. His services were readily accepted, and he took his post at the helm.

The wind favoring his design, he put her head for his native town, and let her drive; nor was the trick discovered until it was too late. For as they were approaching near the place of destination, the prize master says to the pilot, 'Sir, we are going to New-York, are we?' The pilot very respectfully bowing, answered laconically, 'no Sir, no. We are going to Newport.'*

George W. Babcock, of Narragansett, who sailed from Newport, distinguished himself as a naval commander, and fought some of the most bloody and obstinate battles during the war. In the spring of 1779, he sailed from Boston, and on the 16th of May, he fell in with, and captured (after an obstinate engagement,) a British privateer, called the *Tartar*, a few days from Cork.

The *Tartar* mounted twenty-six carriage guns, with a complement of one hundred and sixty-two men. Capt. Babcock commanded the *Mifflin*, of twenty guns, and a complement of one hundred and fifty men. But having previously taken and manned several prizes, the actual number in the engagement could not exceed one hundred and twenty men. The crew of the *Mifflin*, were principally from Newport and Narragansett. Her first Lieut. Mr. Timothy Coggeshall, was an inhabitant of this Island.

* The above account of Captain Oliver Read, although principally derived from tradition, is believed to be substantially correct.

The battle raged with increasing violence for several hours, at a very short distance, and before the deadly conflict was hushed, the vessels were so near each other, that they could readily jump from one to the other.— But the British flag finally came down, and Capt. Babcock took possession of the Tartar. Two days previous to this engagement, he had fallen in with and captured the British store ship *Elephant*, which was conveying to England, a large number of invalids, both officers and privates. When Capt. Babcock approached the *Elephant*, and demanded that her colors be struck to an American privateer, her proud and haughty commander, although he knew he could make no effectual resistance, refused to comply.

It is said that Babcock reasoned with him and remonstrated against the unnecessary effusion of blood, his obstinacy would inevitably involve, for several minutes before he ordered his men to fire. The engagement lasted but a few moments before the flag of the *Elephant* was struck; but those moments proved fatal to her commander, who fell, with six of his crew by his side.

The success of Capt. Babcock and his crew, had nearly proved fatal to them. The number of their prisoners had now so increased, as to render their situation far more hazardous than the roar of the British cannon. The only alternative of safety that presented itself, was, the dismissal of a large number of them. Accordingly, after having received a bill from the British officer, acknowledging the receipt of so many prisoners of war, Capt. Babcock put them on board a prize ship, and left them to pursue their voyage. The *Mifflin* after the engagement sailed for France, and the *Tartar* was sent to Boston, where she subsequently arrived in safety.

On the return of peace, the town of Newport was in ruins. The storm of war had beat heavily upon her, and, to use the language of Dr. Waterhouse, “she resembled an old battered shield, long held up against the common

enemy." While the British troops had possession of the town, they converted most of the meeting-houses and other public buildings into hospitals, barracks, &c. so that literally they had made the house of God a den of thieves. They tore down the pews and the pulpits of some of the meeting-houses, beside otherwise greatly injuring them. They took down the bells of the Congregational meeting-houses, and carried them away. The places of worship were in a state of dilapidation and ruin, so that it might well have been said at that time,

"How are the seats of worship broke!
They tear the buildings down;
And he that deals the heaviest stroke,
Procures the chief renown."

The only place of worship that had escaped their depredations, was the Episcopal Church.

In addition to the destruction of property in public buildings, many private dwelling-houses were either greatly injured or totally destroyed. According to the estimate of a committee appointed by the General Assembly, for that purpose, it appears that the loss sustained by the inhabitants of Newport, in the destruction of dwelling-houses and other property, amounted to £124,798 13s. 5d. silver money. This estimate includes the loss of private property, sustained by individuals only. By an account of the number of inhabitants in Newport, taken by order of the General Assembly in 1782, there were at that time 4912 whites, and 618 colored inhabitants, including 69 Indians; making the whole population 5530. This estimate, compared with that made by order of the General Government in 1774, shows a decrease of the population of this town during the war, of 3679. That estimate gave to Newport a population of 7917 whites, 1246 blacks and 46 Indians; making a sum total of 9209. And this was supposed to fall considerably below the actual number, being underrated for the purpose of escaping greater requisitions for men and money. If, as is supposed, Newport once numbered 11,000

inhabitants, about one half that number was dispersed by the revolution. The population of Providence was then only 4321. Mr. Bull says, "The town of Providence, from the time it was burned or nearly destroyed, in King Philip's war, had been constantly recovering, but at first very slowly; for tradition says, that for sixty or seventy years after that war, the town of Providence had but little more than recovered her former size. At the time we have arrived at (viz. 1774) the town of Providence was much increased in population, business and wealth. Its trade, commerce and manufactures had assumed a vigorous appearance, and every indication of future enlargement, even before the revolutionary war. That war, by drawing from Newport much of the wealth, the industry, the commerce, the commercial capital, and commercial intelligence of the town, contributed to the fortune, growth and prosperity of Providence. Situated on a navigable river, which was unapproachable by an enemy, she enjoyed greater security than most other commercial towns during the revolutionary struggle, and with that security came innumerable other advantages.

In Philip's war, much of the strength and capacity of the town of Providence, removed and settled in Newport, which was abundantly repaid in the war of the revolution. Owing to those two circumstances, the ancient families of both these towns are in a greater or less degree related by blood to each other."

But the return of peace brought with it the cheering prospect of better times; and the inhabitants of Newport, who were left at the termination of a long, and to them, disastrous war, were animated by the consideration that America was disenthralled, regenerated and free. Inspired by the cheering prospects of the future, they rose up amidst the wide-spread ruin around them, and the canvas of her merchant ships again whitened the ocean, speeding their way to foreign ports, or returning laden with products of other climes.

But the fortune of war had so greatly diminished the

wealth and enterprise of Newport, bestowing on Providence and New-York, those immense resources of her former power, and for the want of other advantages enjoyed by those places, Newport has never been able to regain her former comparative importance. Providence had enjoyed a large and extensive country trade, and the numerous streams of water in its vicinity being soon employed in moving machinery for the manufacture of cotton cloths, gave that town a decided advantage over Newport.

In 1784, Newport was incorporated as a city, and on the first day of June, of that year, the first choice of city officers was had. This form of government was, however, soon abandoned, and the old form of town government returned to, in March, 1787.

After the Colonies had shaken off the yoke of British oppression, and driven from their shores the invading foe, it became necessary to form a system of government, a civil compact or general government, embracing the great interests and common welfare of the several Colonies. But, in order to effect this, it became requisite for each to surrender a portion of their power to the general government. And in conformity to a resolution of the general Congress, all the Colonies except Rhode-Island, chose delegates to meet at Philadelphia, in general Convention, for the purpose of deliberating upon and forming a Constitution of federal government.

Owing to the state of party feelings in Rhode-Island, at that time, we were not represented in that body. The motion made in General Assembly for the appointment of delegates to set in general Convention, was lost by a majority of 23 against it. After a form of government was agreed upon by the Convention, and transmitted by them to Congress, recommending that the same be sent to the several States for their sanction, and that they severally call Conventions for that purpose, the Legislature of this State thought proper, instead of calling a Conven-

tion, to submit it to the freemen of the several towns, to be acted upon by them in town-meeting.

In the preamble to the act of the General Assembly, referring it to the several towns, they say, "And whereas this legislative body, in General Assembly convened, conceiving themselves representatives of the great body of the people at large, and that they cannot make any innovations on a Constitution which has been agreed on, and the compact settled between the government and governed, without the express consent of the freemen at large, by their own voices individually taken in town-meeting assembled." This mode of decision in town-meetings was strongly opposed by representatives from the commercial towns, but to no effect.

At a meeting of the freemen of Newport, held agreeably to the act of Assembly on the 4th Monday in March, 1786, the day appointed for the several towns in the State to hold town-meetings to consider the proposed Constitution, the business of the meeting was prefaced by the Moderator, by reciting the acts of government which were referred to the decision of the people.

The Constitution was then read, and the Moderator stated the proceedings of the General Assembly upon it, since it had been transmitted to them. He also informed the town of the uniform conduct of their representatives, in endeavoring to obtain the appointment of a Convention; after which, several gentlemen entered into an investigation of the act of Assembly, altering the mode of decision from that recommended by the general Convention to Congress; and while they paid all possible respect to the Legislature who passed the act, the principle on which the act was founded, was reprobated in the most unqualified terms.

The meeting appointed a committee to draft instructions to our representatives, to endeavor to have a Convention called. The meeting was composed of between three and four hundred freemen, yet eleven persons only

voted on the question. Ten against and one in favor of the Constitution. In Providence, only one person voted, and he in the negative. In Warwick and Greenwich, the federalists or friends of the Constitution entered a protest against the alteration of the mode of decision, as illegal and unprecedented. In Bristol and Little-Compton, there was a majority in favor of the Constitution.—The other towns generally gave their voice against it.

The majority against the Constitution throughout the State was large, as the Federalists, generally declined giving their votes in town-meeting. On counting the votes in General Assembly, they stood 2708 nays and 237 yeas, and a committee was appointed to draft a letter to the President of Congress, enclosing the returns, which letter stated the reasons for adopting a mode different from that recommended by the General Convention, conceded a deficiency in the confederation, and expressed a willingness to grant Congress unlimited power, for regulating commerce, collecting impost, excise, &c.

The opposers of the Constitution were the uniform supporters of the paper money system, which they knew must cease, on adopting the Constitution. This, together with a jealousy entertained that the General Government would possess too much power, and if adopted, they must relinquish some privileges now enjoyed, kept this State so long from coming into the Union, greatly to the dissatisfaction of the commercial and business men of the State. This union was not effected until 1790, and not until by acts of Congress, the navigation of Rhode-Island was placed on a footing with foreign commerce, exacting foreign duties and tonnage from our vessels.

These acts, however, were not strictly enforced by Government, who listened to the petitions of our merchants and the prayers of the General Assembly for relief, by the suspension of said acts, from time to time. In January, 1790, an act passed in General Assembly for calling a Convention of the State, which met in Newport

the following March, when the Constitution was agreed to, and the State came into the confederacy.

The paper money system was formerly, if not now, a matter of party warfare. Governors were elected or turned out of office, as the different interests happened to prevail. The commercial part of the community were always opposed to the system, as it tended greatly to embarrass trade, and by its depreciation and constant fluctuation, great injustice grew out of the system. Many took advantage of the laws, making it a tender at par, to pay debts in depreciated money; and creditors who had parted with their gold and silver, were obliged to receive this money in return for their debts.

In 1710, the then Colony of Rhode-Island commenced the issue of paper money, to defray the public expenses of the war of that year, and after that period, new emissions were made from time to time, as circumstances required. Sometimes paper was issued to replenish the treasury, sometimes to loan the people on mortgage, until the increasing amount issued, caused it almost constantly to depreciate in current value; and as the money decreased in value, the emissions were increased, until about 1749, the General Assembly was restricted by Parliament from making any more, except under certain limitations. The various emissions from time to time, were, as the time for which they were issued expired, called in and sunk, it generally being made redeemable in some given time. It has been estimated that in 1748, there was in circulation in this State, in what was called old tenor, £500,000. By a report of a committee to the General Assembly, in 1749, they made the outstanding bills at that time, £320,444. 2. 3 1-2.

By a report of a committee to the General Assembly, in 1764, in answer to the enquiry of the Lords Commissioners of trade, it appears there was then in circulation, £40,000 in bills issued to carry on the war, equal to £30,000 sterling; about two thirds of which sum must be called in and sunk in a year from that time, after

which they say, £13,000 only of the bills issued to defray the expense of the war, will be in circulation, and these, with the small remainder of old tenor bills that shall be outstanding, will come to a final end in 1767.

By an act of Assembly, Sept. 1770, the circulation of the old tenor bills was prohibited. They were to be brought into the treasury and exchanged for treasury notes, at the rate of £8 old tenor, for one dollar. In May, 1775, the State having voted to raise troops, issued £20,000 in bills on interest at 2 1-2 per cent. and made them a tender for all debts, 6s. 9d. to the silver ounce.— In August of this year, the Continental bills, of which there were beginning to be large emissions by Congress, were made a tender at 6s. per dollar.

Emissions of paper were now frequently made by the Colony, and those persons who should undervalue the bills, were declared enemies to the public weal, and every possible exertion was made, during the revolutionary war, to sustain their credit and keep up their value. In 1776, a committee of the New-England States recommended them to emit no more bills of credit, unless absolutely necessary; but to tax or borrow, and if they did emit money, to issue bills on interest at 4 per cent. The General Assembly approved this plan, and ordered £40,000 to be hired in notes payable in two years. In 1777, they ordered £50,000 lawful money to be hired, and notes given on interest for the same, at 4 per cent.

These notes at first were made a legal tender, but was afterward repealed, and all contracts were to be paid in specie. In 1778 and 1782, acts were passed for consolidating the paper money, and ordering all notes and bills to be brought into the treasury, and interest calculated at 6 per cent. from June, 1778, when they were struck out of circulation, and new notes given on interest.

On the return of peace, in 1783, there was very little gold and silver in circulation, and nothing to supply its place, as a circulating medium. It was customary for the merchants to pay the mechanics and laborers in their

employ, in tea, sugar, coffee, &c., which they were obliged to take to market and exchange with the farmers for provisions. And so difficult was it to raise money, that the farmers suffered greatly in having cattle taken from them, and sold for payment of taxes.

This State, from its local situation, was exposed during the war, to the frequent incursions of the enemy.—These incursions were repelled chiefly by the militia of Rhode-Island, under the direction and at the expense (in the first instance) of the State. “By reason of which, Rhode-Island incurred a much larger debt than perhaps any of her sister States, in proportion to her estimated rate in the valuation of the United States.”* A committee appointed by the General Assembly to inquire into the state of the public securities due from the State, reported a debt of £153,047. 15. 9 1-2, of which £106,976. 11. 3 1-2, was on interest at 6 per cent. for treasury notes issued for soldiers’ wages—depreciation of soldiers’ wages, debts due for confiscated estates, for money loaned, &c. &c.; and £46,071. 4. 6. of which was on interest at 4 per cent. and was for debts due from government, in 1777.

In May, 1786, the paper money party having prevailed and chosen their candidate for Governor, &c., an act was passed for emitting £100,000 lawful money, in bills of credit, and making the same a legal tender at par, for the payment of debts. The 6 per cent. debt was consolidated by a scale of depreciation to real money, at 6 shillings per dollar, and by an act of Assembly, was to be paid in the paper emission of 1786, at its nominal value; although that had already depreciated to 48s. for a dollar. It was proposed to consolidate the 4 per cent. debt at 40 for 1, and payable in the same emission at its nominal value.

In October, 1789, the value of bills emitted in 1786, was made 15 paper dollars for one of silver. But gold

* Report of a Committee to the General Assembly.

and silver being very scarce, and considering the impracticability of discharging debts in specie, it was enacted that real estate of not less value than £40, and personal property within the State, might be substituted in the payment of debts under certain restrictions. The Governor, in his message to the General Assembly, in Oct. 1791, speaking of the State debt, says, "This debt was wholly incurred during the late war, in the common defence of the nation."

"After peace took place, it was found by experience impracticable to discharge it in the ordinary mode of taxes in gold and silver, recourse was had to paper money; this was issued in 1786. The holders of State securities were required to receive it in payment on penalty of forfeiting the whole amount of their respective demands.—Owing to the unhappy divisions that prevailed, it suffered an unusual depreciation, but payments in paper were made to nearly the amount of £79,000, and securities to the amount of about £48,000 were lodged in the General Treasury, in consequence of the requisition of the Legislature for bringing them in for the paper money.

The specie value of the payments thus made in paper, was only about one sixth part, or perhaps less, of the nominal value, from the great depreciation of the paper money. And finally at the rate of about 15 for 1, it became indispensably necessary for the Legislature to interpose. And as an appreciation of the paper at par, in the greatly depreciated state, would have been productive of as much, or perhaps more injustice, than its depreciation, the Legislature had no alternative but to arrest it as it was; to repeal the tender and declare that it should finally be redeemed at the rate of 15 for 1. And an act for this purpose was passed in October, 1789.

In August, last year, Congress assumed 21,500,000 dollars of the debt of the several States, including in the assumption, 200,000 dollars of the debt of this State, and as the sum assumed is charged by the United States to the State, from which it is assumed, if the Legislature

had not interposed, those who did not comply with the requisition for receiving the paper money, would have received the whole benefit of this assumption, and a realization of the greatest part of their securities, while those that did comply, would not only lose five-sixths of their demands, but must have contributed their full proportion to the paying the whole amount of the securities, which had been confiscated as before mentioned." In obedience to acts of the General Assembly of this State of January and June of 1795, making provision for the transfer of the stock of the United States belonging to this State to the individual creditors thereof, the General Treasurer reported as due for certificates issued for various kinds of debts incurred during the revolution, and for consolidating the paper money and securities issued for paper money, and for sinking the 4 per cent. notes, and including notes issued previous to the revolution, &c., the sum of \$503,594 76, of which 5-6 or \$419,662 30, was issuable in certificates for funded stock of the United States, and 1-6 or \$83,932 46, in State certificates unprovided for.

In February, 1803, the General Treasurer reported the above \$83,932 46, together with additional claims brought in, and allowed by the State from time to time, making in all a registered State debt of \$163,163 71.—Which debt was afterward from time to time reduced, until June 1804. By his report, it appeared there was a balance of principle and interest then due, of \$120,949 04. And in a subsequent report in 1807, he reported \$10,680 14, more of said balance as paid. But a large proportion of said balance, remains to this day, unpaid.

Rhode-Island, like most of her sister States of New-England, was formerly a slave-holding State. The African slave-trade was extensively carried on by the people of Newport, and much of her wealth in former times, was derived from this trade. Most of the families were slave-holders, and owned more or less of this kind of property.

In 1784, the General Assembly passed an act, authorizing the manumission of negroes, mulattoes, &c., and provided that no persons, negroes, or mulattoes, born in the State, after the first day of the year 1784, shall be slaves for life. The Assembly also repealed the clause contained in an act passed in 1774, permitting slaves brought from Africa to the West Indies on board any vessel belonging to this then Colony, and that could not be disposed of in the West Indies, to be brought to this State; and provided that in future no negro or mulatto be brought into this State to be sold or disposed of as a slave.

The Friends of New-England, as a Society, interested themselves to accomplish the abolition of slavery, and when taken into consideration by the people of Rhode-Island, it was found not to be congenial with our free institutions.

The late Dr. Samuel Hopkins, of Newport, some years before the revolutionary war, raised his voice against this traffic in human blood, and in a sermon preached by him, publicly advocated its abolition. Situated as he was, in the midst of a population deriving much of their wealth from this business, he nobly dared to show the people their transgression, and the house of Israel their sins. Nor were his efforts unavailing. He so far succeeded as to induce many of the members of his Church to free their slaves: and finally as a body to pass resolutions disapproving the trade, and declaring that they would not tolerate it.

In 1787, the Legislature of Rhode-Island passed an act to prevent the slave-trade from being carried on from this State, and for the encouragement of the abolition of slavery altogether within it.

Rhode-Island is justly entitled to the honor of successfully contending with the mother country, in the manufacture of cotton cloths, and operating successfully the first machinery, by water power, in this country. The

Rev. George S. White, has recently published a memoir of Samuel Slater, Esq. and a history of manufactures, from which we are made acquainted with the early history of manufacturing in Rhode-Island, and the discouragements and disadvantages it had to contend with in its infancy. The following account of the manufacture of cotton in its commencement and progress, is from that work :—

“The State of Rhode-Island justly claims the honor of being one of the earliest seats of the mechanic arts, and of manufactures on this side the Atlantic. It was the invariable and settled policy of Great Britain, to keep her Colonies dependent upon her for every article she possibly could, with which she could supply them. This policy prevented the introduction of machinery and all mechanical operations and improvements. Chatham said, “He would not have the Americans make a hob-nail.” It was this that occasioned a great part of the sufferings of the American army, during the war of the revolution. So entirely dependent had we been on England, for supplying our wants, that being without domestic manufactures, our troops often suffered for clothing and other necessities of life. For many years after the settlement of this country, our people were employed in bringing their lands into a state of cultivation, and no attention was paid to manufactures. And when at last a few coarse and imperfect articles were manufactured, we were viewed by Great Britain with a jealous and suspicious eye, and she immediately adopted a rigid and systematic course of restrictions, on Colonial manufactures.

In 1719, the House of Commons declared, “That the erecting of manufactories in the Colonies, tended to lessen their dependence on Great Britain.” When we had achieved our independence and taken our stand among the nations, a new market was opened for all commercial countries, as well as England, and the manufactures of those nations were crowded into the United States; and the products of our soil being called for by

Europe, the activity of our commerce caused our merchants to flourish.

These, by furnishing a market, enriched the farmers, and enabled them to give great prices for European and India goods, and nothing of consequence was done in domestic manufactures. From an account of manufacturing cotton in Rhode-Island, furnished Mr. White by William Anthony, we learn that about 1788, Daniel Anthony, Andrew Dexter, and Lewis Peck, all of Providence, entered into an agreement to make what was then called, "Home-spun cloth." The idea at first, was to spin by hand, and make jeans with linen warp and cotton fillings.

But hearing of a model of machinery imported from England, which was at Bridgewater, Mass., where attempts were then making to manufacture; drawings of this were obtained, but which were soon laid aside, the model being imperfect, and said to be taken from one of the first of the kind built in England. They then proceeded to build a machine of a different construction, called a jenny; a model of which was brought from England to Beverly. This jenny had 28 spindles, which was finished in 1787, and set up first in a private house, but afterward was removed to the Market-House chamber, in Providence.

Joshua Laidley, of Providence, then built a carding machine for cotton, from a draft from Beverly. It contained eight heads of four spindles each, making thirty-two spindles, worked by hand with a crank. In 1788, Joseph Alexander and James M'Kerris, arrived at Providence, from Scotland. They were weavers, and understood the fly shuttle. They were employed to weave corduroy, one at Providence, the other at East-Greenwich, and a loom built under the direction of Mr. Alexander, was put in operation in the Market-House chamber, in Providence. This was the first fly shuttle ever used in Rhode-Island.

The spinning frame which was obtained from the

Bridgewater model, and which had been laid aside, was carried to Pawtucket and attached to a wheel propelled by water. The work was too laborious to be turned by hand, and the machine too imperfect to be turned by water. It was soon after sold to Moses Brown, of Providence. Thus as the machinery was worked by hand, the manufacture was imperfect, and little could be done.

About the time this machinery was put in operation, Herman Vandouser, a German, came to East-Greenwich and undertook the business of calico printing, that being his trade. His object was, to print for the people generally. The calico looked much like that imported from India in that day, and not much, if any, inferior to that cloth. It was, however, found to be cheaper to import, and they were given up.

So imperfect was all the machinery in use in America previous to the year 1790, as to preclude the manufacture of cotton cloth, or cotton yarn for warps, and it was thought desirable to import cotton yarn from India; but the machinery was inadequate, and its operations deficient and expensive. Under such embarrassments it was impossible for American manufactures to compete with foreign goods, introduced by British agents and American merchants, even when they received legislative aid, as was the case at Beverly, Mass. Every attempt to spin cotton warp, or twist, or any other yarn by water power, until 1790, had totally failed. Massachusetts had made many attempts, incipient and imperfect, at manufacturing cotton.

Aware of the importance of better machinery, which they knew was in successful operation in England, they had endeavored to obtain a model of the Arkwright patent, but were unable, in consequence of the heavy and severe penalties imposed by the British government on the exportation of mechanism. At this gloomy period in the history of American manufactures, a great and important change was now to succeed, when all the old, imperfect machinery was to be laid aside, and the long-

desired superior Arkwright machinery was to take its place.

Samuel Slater was born in the town of Belpar, in Derbyshire, England, the 9th of June, 1768. When about fourteen years old, he went to live with Jedediah Strutt, Esq. a partner of Sir Richard Arkwright in the cotton-spinning business, with whom Mr. Slater continued until 1789. During four or five of the last years, his time was solely devoted as a general overseer, both as respects making machinery and the manufacturing department. In 1789, he left England and came to New-York.

After an ineffectual attempt to procure employment, he addressed a letter to Moses Brown, of Providence, stating what he thought could be done in machinery, offering his services, which were accepted, and he came to Providence in 1790. He did not bring with him from England, any model, drawings or writings, of any description, except his indentures to Mr. Strutt, which he concealed about him, for fear of being stopped from leaving England. He did not let any of his friends know of his intention, and not until he was ready to embark, did he drop a letter into the Post-Office, informing them of his destination. He came to this country without recommendation and without patronage, depending entirely on his own memory and knowledge of machinery, with a full and decided plan to construct and erect the Arkwright machinery in the United States; and without the aid of any one, who had ever seen such machinery, did actually, from his own personal knowledge and skill, put in motion the whole series of Arkwright patents; and he put them in such perfect operation, as to produce yarn and cotton cloth of various descriptions, equal to any article of the kind produced in England at that time. So complete was his success, notwithstanding all the disadvantages he labored under, that in fourteen months from the time he commenced his labors, Moses Brown informed the Secretary of the Treasury, that machinery and mills could be erected within one year, to supply the

whole United States with yarn, and render the importation unnecessary.

Mr. Slater claims to have established the first Sabbath school in New-England. He introduced Sunday school instruction in his mill, a system which had obtained in the mills of Strutt and Arkwright, previous to the time Mr. Slater left England. These schools, the first of the kind in America, were copied and extended with the factories, and ultimately prompted establishments of a similar character in our seaports." Sabbath schools were first introduced in Providence from Pawtucket in 1815. They were first considered charity schools, and but few children, save from the poorest classes of the community, could be prevailed on to attend; and for the instruction of these, their teachers received a regular compensation. Subsequently, several religious denominations embarked in the Sabbath school enterprise. But this, like all other benevolent and moral enterprises in its infancy, had a fiery ordeal to pass. Many good men hesitated, and even entertained conscientious scruples concerning its influence on the proper observance of the Sabbath, and the civil institutions of our country. Legislators and statesmen, with feverish political sagacity saw, or imagined they saw, in this enterprise, a union of church and state; and the whole system was condemned, as a system of priestcraft and fanaticism. But God has silenced every objection, and stamped the broad seal of heaven on this holy and benevolent enterprise.

Now it has become, in the estimation of the patriot, the philanthropist and statesman, no less than the Christian, the public guardian of the Sabbath, and the saviour of our country. Who, that values the blessings of civil and religious freedom, can dwell on the transporting fact, without the sincerest emotions of gratitude to God, that on each succeeding Sabbath, more than A MILLION of the children and youth of this country are brought under the influence of Sabbath school instruction—under the influence of principles, which not only teach, but

qualify them, to discharge their duty to themselves, their country, and their God.

More than thirty thousand teachers and fifty thousand scholars have been hopefully converted to God, in this country, through the instrumentality of Sabbath schools ! What a mighty moral influence is constantly going forth from this institution, to purify this nation from their sins. What an army of holy, evangelical ministers have been raised up here, who now stand on the high places in Zion. What a host of self-denying missionaries of the cross first caught the celestial fire of love to the dying heathen, within the hallowed walls of this sacred institution. From this nursery of piety and morals, we are to look for a race of men, whose minds shall not only be cultivated by science, but imbued with the spirit and principles of truth. Men who shall feel the power, and act under the influence, of moral principle, in the discharge of their duty to themselves, their country and their God. Men, whose influence shall counteract the rapid growth of infidelity, the desecration of the Sabbath, the increase of Romanism, and guard with unyielding fidelity the constitutional rights of the people. Men, who shall maintain unimpaired, those great principles of civil and religious freedom, bequeathed us by our ancestors as a legacy of blood, and save the ark of our national covenant from the polluted hands of aspiring political demagogues.

“ Most of the cotton manufacturing establishments in our country from 1790 to 1809, were built by men who had either directly or indirectly drawn their knowledge of the business from Pawtucket, the cradle of American manufactures. Our manufactures have had to contend with very great difficulties, the greatest of which, however, has been the want of encouragement from the Americans themselves, who preferred foreign manufactures to those of their own country.

The war of 1812 did not diminish, but rather increase this desire ; and on the return of peace, in

1815, the country was flooded with every description of foreign goods, which reduced the price of domestic manufactures at least one third of their previous value, and greatly discouraged our infant establishments, some of which were ruined, and many companies failed, involving their enterprising owners in bankruptcy. To the undaunted perseverance of a few of those establishments, amidst the wide-spread ruin around them, we are indebted for the present progress and triumph of our improved manufactures.

By the introduction of the latest and most improved machinery, with the advantages of New-England water power, they have survived every shock, surmounted every obstacle, and triumphed over every difficulty. Irish linens and India cottons, which once supplied our market, are now but little known. An immense quantity of cotton cloths are sold at very low prices in all parts of the Union, both plain and printed. Large exportations are made to South America, where they are held in high repute, and command the market over British and India goods.

Samuel Slater, the father of our manufactures, lived to see this astonishing change, and the successful consummation of what he had at first introduced by unwavering firmness, under various and complicated discouragements, now unknown. He commenced with 72 spindles, in a clothiers' shop, in Pawtucket; nor could he find a ready market after he had spun his yarn, at that time, in America.

Previous to 1815, the whole of the weaving was done by the hand-loom, and great quantities of cloth were produced for home consumption. Judge Lyman, of Providence, had attempted to construct the power loom, but his efforts were unsuccessful, and on hearing of a Mr. Gilmore, who had come from England, in 1814, he, with several other gentlemen, employed him to build the power loom and dresser, from patterns which he had

brought with him from England ; which he accomplished to the perfect satisfaction of his employers.

They were soon introduced into Pawtucket, and Mr. David Wilkinson, an ingenious and enterprising mechanic of that place, made them as an article of sale.—The hand-loom was immediately superceded, and now no one in the manufacturing districts, thinks of using them any more than the old fashioned one thread spinning wheel." Previous to the revolution, there was an iron foundry in Rhode-Island, which, during the war, was employed in casting cannon. Other branches of manufactures have been, and still are, carried on to a great extent in this State.

Recently, the manufacture of jewelry was extensively conducted in Providence, and great quantities exported. Hats, shoes, leather, &c., are manufactured in the State, which, together with her extensive manufactures of cotton and woollen goods, afford employment for many of our inhabitants. And for industry, enterprise, and perseverance, Rhode-Island yields to none of her sister States.

In 1812, the American Government formally declared war with Great Britain, when Newport was again exposed to all the apprehensions of being visited by an invading hostile foe, whose ships of war were frequently seen during its continuance, hovering round her shores. A memorial was sent from this town to the General Government, setting forth our exposed and defenceless condition, in case of an invasion.

Our militia and independent companies were all we had to depend upon for protection and defence, for some time after war was declared, the Government having drawn away the United States troops stationed in the forts of our harbor. But notwithstanding this, the inhabitants were resolved to repel any attempts made by the enemy, and our little forces were ever ready to repair to their posts on any alarm.

On the 6th of December, the inhabitants of Newport had the satisfaction of seeing the British frigate Mace-

donian arrive in our harbor, a prize to the American frigate *United States*, Capt. Decatur.

Her wounded were landed at Coaster's harbor, and at the hospital on that Island, they received every attention which their situation required. At the commencement of hostilities, the British blockaded the coast of America.— At first the Southern coast, but afterward it extended as far North as the East end of Long-Island Sound. This gave the ports of Massachusetts and Rhode-Island, the advantages of the neutral trade, until the blockade of the whole American coast.

Newport, for a while, enjoyed a large share of the trade, and the arrival and departure of the neutral vessels, the sale of their cargoes, &c., gave employment to many of our citizens. The inhabitants of Newport, recollecting the destruction of their registry during the war of the revolution, took the precaution to send from the Island, the records of the town, made since the revolution. They were deposited with the town of South Kingstown, for safe keeping, where they remained until peace was again proclaimed. The Banks of Newport, also, removed their specie from this town.

In 1813, Capt. Oliver H. Perry left Newport with a detachment of seamen from the gun boats in this harbor, to take command of the American squadron on Lake Erie, where, on the 10th of September, after a most desperate engagement, he achieved a splendid victory over the whole British fleet on that lake. When Capt. Perry arrived at the lake, government had neither men nor ships at that place.

He immediately commenced building a squadron, in which he achieved his victory, and prepared the way for the future success of our Western army. The victory of our fellow townsman was hailed in this town, with the greatest enthusiasm; and on his return to Newport, he was received with every demonstration of respect. Lieutenants William V. Taylor and Daniel Turner, also our fellow townsmen, who were with him in the battle, shared with their gallant commander, in the tribute paid to valor.

On the 4th of October, 1813, a small British privateer called the *Dart*, which had been hovering about our harbor, was seen having in company a ship, brig, and schooner, which she had detained. The revenue cutter *Vigilant*, Capt. John Cahoon, was manned with volunteers from this town, and seamen from the gun boats, and went out in pursuit of her. They soon came up with, and carried her, after a slight resistance, and brought her into Newport. The first Lieut. of the *Dart* was killed. The capture of this privateer was unquestionably the means of saving a large amount of property from being captured.

In December, the President of the United States, in a message to Congress, says, "The tendency of our commercial and navigation laws in their present state, to favor the enemy, and thereby prolong the war, is more and more developed by experience. Supplies of the most essential kind find their way, not only to British ports and British armies at a distance, but the armies in our neighborhood with which our own are contending, derive from our ports and outlets, a subsistence attainable with difficulty, if attainable at all from other sources.

Even the fleets and troops infesting our coasts and waters, are by like supplies accommodated and encouraged in their predatory and incursive warfare." An embargo was immediately laid by Congress on all vessels, except neutrals, which were permitted to depart, provided, they carried with them nothing but sea stores. So rigorous was the embargo, that coasting from one town to another in the same State, was subjected to the most strict and severe scrutiny from officers of the revenue.

The crews of the coasting vessels in our harbor, at the time the embargo was laid, shouldered their packs, and leaving their vessels, returned home. The embargo at once put an end to the prosperity and business appearance of Newport, which soon relaxed into dulness and inactivity. This monotony, however, was occasionally relieved by an alarm. On the 30th of May, 1814, a

Swedish brig from St. Barts, attempting to violate the blockade, was chased on shore by the British brig of war *Nimrod*, in the East Passage, on Smith's beach. The next morning the *Nimrod* came to anchor about a mile from shore, and sent a barge to set fire to the brig, which they effectually accomplished without loss.

Every exertion was made by the militia of Middletown, the 3d company from Newport, and a detachment of seamen from the United States flotilla, to prevent it, but having nothing but small arms with them, their efforts were ineffectual. The *Nimrod* fired about 200 cannon balls, one of which killed Mr. John Smith, of the Middletown militia, and took off the leg of Isaac Bassett, a seaman belonging to the flotilla.

A few days previous to this, the barges of the *Nimrod* had chased two sloops on shore in the East Passage; but the militia of Little Compton, having assembled in considerable numbers, they were prevented from taking possession of them. The sloops were got off, and proceeded up the river.

In June, 1814, the General Assembly passed an act authorizing the town-councils of the several seaport towns, to cause the shipping to be removed from their wharves and harbors, whenever by them it should be thought advisable. The town-council of Newport, accordingly ordered the shipping to be removed from Newport, lest it should be an inducement for the enemy to visit us.

In July, the Artillery Company of the town of Newport, under command of Col. Fry, took possession of Fort Green, at the North end of Washington-street, on the Point, by an arrangement with the U. S. Government. Col. Fry was to have the entire command of the fort, and the company to be under the control of the Governor of the State.

The entrance of the harbor was also garrisoned about the same time, by the enlisted State corps, under command of Col. John Wood. These posts were occupied until the

proclamation of peace. The news of peace reached this town on the morning of the 14th of February, 1815.—The joy of the inhabitants was expressed during the day, by the ringing of bells, the roar of cannon, and the display of the military. In the evening, a most splendid and general illumination of the town took place, and a display of paper lanterns with emblematic devices, suspended in the streets, which notwithstanding the great quantity of snow in them, were thoroughly promenaded by almost every man, woman, and child, in the place.—Similar demonstrations of joy took place in nearly every town in the State.

This war, although short in duration, was signalized by a rapid succession of naval victories on the ocean and the lakes; and disappointed the predictions of those who asserted that she who sat as queen upon the waters, would in a few months, sweep our infant navy from the bosom of the ocean. But the testimony of the proud mistress of the ocean herself, is the best tribute of respect to the skill of our officers, the valor of our crews, and the magnitude of our power.

At a meeting of the merchants, manufacturers, ship-owners, and underwriters, in the city of Glasgow, in 1814, it was declared by them, "There is reason to believe in the short space of twenty-four months, above eight hundred vessels have been captured by a power whose maritime strength we have hitherto held in contempt. The number of privateers that infest our coast, and the audacity with which they approach our shores, and their success, is humiliating to our pride." And they further say, "Our nation have declared the whole coast of America in blockade, and it is mortifying that our ships cannot traverse our own channels in safety. Insurance cannot be effected, but at an excessive premium."

Rhode-Island can justly boast of having furnished a Green for her country, in the war of the revolution, who, in rank and generalship, was second to none, save the immortal Washington himself. And the war of 1812

brought forth, and contributed to her country's glory, the mighty energies of her gallant Perry.

Mr. Hunter, who was then our Senator in Congress, in a speech in the Senate of the United States, on the resolutions complimentary of Commodore Perry's victory, said, "While I hold in my hand this resolution, expressive of a nation's gratitude toward this naval youthful Rhode-Island hero, for his deliverance of the West, I can point the other to the likeness of that illustrious Rhode-Island veteran, (alluding to the likeness of Gen. Green, in the Senate) who in the sacred war of the revolution, saved the South, and accelerated and ascertained the independence of his country."

Commodore Perry died in the 34th year of his age, August 23d, A. D. 1819, on board the United States schooner *Nonsuch*, at the moment the schooner was entering the harbor of Port Spain, in the Island of Trinidad. He died of the yellow fever, contracted at Angostura, where he had been transacting business for our Government. His remains were interred on the 24th, at Port Spain, with every mark of respect, from Sir Ralph Woodford, Governor of Trinidad, and the inhabitants of the place. The body was landed from the *John Adams*, where it had been removed from the schooner, under a salute of minute guns from that ship. When it reached the shore, the Fort of St. Andrews continued the ceremony, until the long procession, accompanied by the band of the 3d West India regiment, playing the dead march in *Saul*, reached the burial place.

After the funeral, the following Card was published by the American officers:—

"The officers of the United States vessels *John Adams* and *Nonsuch*, tender their grateful acknowledgments to the inhabitants of Port Spain, for their kind and respectful attention to the funeral rites bestowed on the body of their late commander, Commodore Perry. The disposition manifested by all classes, was highly in unison with their feelings, and merits their warmest thanks."

Commodore Perry, at the time of his death, was engaged in executing the duties of a "highly flattering

command, involving diplomatic and naval functions of critical nicety and importance." President Monroe, in his message to Congress, in December following, referring to several acts and orders for the protection of our commerce, and the suppression of the slave-trade, says, "In the execution of the duty imposed by these acts, and of high trust connected with it, it is with deep regret I have to state the loss which has been sustained by the death of Commodore Perry. His gallantry in a brilliant exploit, in the late war, added to the renown of his country; his death is deplored as a national misfortune."

Soon after the death of Commodore Perry, the Legislature of Rhode-Island by their resolution, requested the Hon. Benjamin Hazard, of this town, to compose and publish his biography, which it is greatly to be regretted that gentleman has not complied with.—It is to be hoped, however, that one so eminently qualified to do justice to the subject, both by his literary advantages and his intimate acquaintance with the gallant Commodore, while living, will yet favor his country and posterity, by complying with the request of the Legislature.*

The remains of Commodore Perry arrived at Newport, from Trinidad, in the sloop of war Lexington, on Monday the 27th of November, 1826, and on Monday following, the 4th of December, were interred in the common burial place in this town, with the honors due to his rank and character.

The military companies of Providence, Pawtucket;

* In June, 1818, the General Assembly of Rhode-Island, by their resolve, appointed Benjamin Hazard and William C. Gibbs, Esqrs. a committee with instructions to collect and deposite in the Secretary's office, all the documents and memorials necessary to preserve entire the history of the brilliant events achieved by Commodore Perry, on Lake Erie, comprehending the exertions of that officer, in creating as it were, under every discouragement, the means which insured his success; and also the details of the action—and that they also request Commodore Perry, in the name of the General Assembly, to sit for his portrait to Gilbert Stuart. Commodore Perry accordingly set to Stuart, but Mr. Stuart never finished the picture.

and Bristol, attended the procession, with the companies of Newport. The Governor, and other officers of State, with several distinguished naval and military officers, were present, and the vast assemblage of our citizens testified their respect to the character of our fallen fellow townsman. The State of Rhode-Island has since erected a monument in honor of the memory of this lamented and gallant officer.

The 23d of September, 1815, is rendered memorable by a most awful and destructive storm, which swept away and laid prostrate, almost every thing in its course. The Newport Mercury says, "The gale commenced early in the morning, at N. E., and continued increasing in violence, the wind varying from N. E. to S. E. and S. W., until about 11 o'clock, when it began to abate, and about 1 o'clock, the danger from the wind and tide was over." At Newport, the tide rose three feet and a half higher than it had ever been known before.

Two dwelling houses and nine stores and workshops, on the Long-wharf, were swept away by the violence of the wind and waves; and those that withstood the power of this desolating scourge, were rendered almost untenable, by the vessels, lumber, &c., driving against them.—Several of the stores carried away, contained a considerable amount of property, nearly the whole of which was lost.

In one of the houses carried away from the Long-wharf, five persons perished. The wharves on the Point, with most of the stores on them, were carried away. The wharves also, in other parts of the town, with the stores on them, sustained considerable injury, and every thing moveable on the wharves, was swept away. In some of the stores, the water was four feet deep. A large three story store, containing hemp, flour, &c., was lifted from its foundation and floated into the harbor. The steeples of the first and second Congregational Churches were

partly blown down, and the roofs of the Episcopal and first Congregational Churches were partly carried away.

After the storm, it was found that the out-side of windows, in the houses of this town, were covered with a fine salt, conveyed from the ocean through the air. This was also noticed for many miles inland, after the gale.—The shipping in the harbor were driven from their anchorage, and went ashore. Some lying side of the wharves were lifted on them by the violence of the wind and tide, and left. Four sloops were lifted on the Long-wharf, and a sloop loaded with wood, went over the wharf into the cove.

The stone bridge, connecting the Island with Tiverton on the main, was greatly injured and rendered wholly impassable. The draw and toll-house were carried away; a new channel about three hundred feet wide, was made at the West end of the bridge, and where the toll-house had stood, the water was thirty feet deep at low tide. The light-house on Point Judith was swept away, with several other houses, in its vicinity. The Rhode-Island Republican, says, "So great and general has been the devastation of property, that it is found impossible to give a correct account of the extent of damage."

Providence suffered severely by the storm; the tide rising twelve feet higher than spring tides, inundated the streets in various parts of the town. It extended in Westminster-street, a considerable distance beyond where Grace Church now stands; so that the lives of many families, particularly on the West side, were in the most imminent danger. Vessels were thrown into the streets, men were seen flying in every direction, for protection for themselves, or braving the violence of the storm, for those they loved. Many families were driven to the upper rooms of their houses, where with the most fearful apprehensions, they listened to the war of the elements without, and witnessed the wide spread havoc around them. Many women and children were rescued from their chamber windows.

Weybosset Bridge was entirely swept away: every vessel but two, in the harbor, were driven from their moorings, and thirty-five sail were driven on shore at the head of the cove, above the bridge. Scarcely a vestige of the spacious stores which crowded the wharves bordering on Weybosset-street, remained, and most of those South of the market to India Point, shared the same fate.

The third story of the Washington Insurance office was severely injured, by being perforated with the bowsprit of a ship. The Rev. Mr. Williams's meeting-house sustained great injury, and the Second Baptist meeting-house, near the water, was totally destroyed.—It is computed that five hundred buildings, of various descriptions, were either greatly damaged or totally destroyed in Providence; and yet amidst this general ruin, two persons only, lost their lives. Bristol, Warren, Wickford, and East Greenwich, also suffered great damage, in vessels and buildings.

The New-England Memorial gives an account of a similar storm on the 15th day of August, 1635, which was the year before Roger Williams came to Providence. In that gale, the tide also rose to the same height in our river. At Narragansett, the natives were obliged to climb trees for safety; but the flood tide returning before the usual time, many of them were drowned.

In 1819, the town of Newport commenced the erection of the Newport Asylum, on Coaster's Harbor Island, which, when completed, was put under the immediate charge of nine commissioners, three of whom go out of office every year, and others are chosen to fill their places. The commissioners have entire control of the Asylum and Island, with the management of its affairs. Previous to building the Asylum, the cost to the town of Newport for the support of the poor, was about \$7000 a year. Since its establishment, that expense has been reduced to about \$3000. The keeper of the establishment manages the farm for the commissioners, and takes care of the

poor, for a stipulated salary. The produce of the farm and the manufactures meet, in part, the expense of the establishment, which expense varies from about 3500 to \$4000 per annum, as more or less inmates are therein, and the price of provisions rises or falls.

In 1822 the Rhode-Island Historical Society was incorporated, for the purpose of collecting papers, manuscripts and documents, relative to the history of the State, and to preserve those which record the passing events. It is to be regretted, that much of the history of Rhode-Island contained in manuscripts, &c. is irrecoverably lost, as well as much traditionary information, which has died, as one and another of our aged fellow-citizens have descended to the grave. Many facts, however, that are valuable to the future historian, have been rescued by the exertions of the Society, from sharing a similar fate; and it is their care to preserve and transmit to posterity, all that is interesting of our own times. The Society of late have maintained an interesting and valuable correspondence, with the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries at Copenhagen, and from the reception of some important documents from them, they have reason to suppose they may derive important aid from that Society, in elucidating the early history of this country. They have also lately received propositions from the Royal Academy of Sciences at Lisbon, soliciting the establishment of a correspondence and an interchange of transactions. The Society have two cabinets, one at Providence and one at Newport; and it should be the endeavor of every citizen to aid them in their efforts, by depositing with them all such papers and manuscripts in their possession as will throw light on the history of the State and facilitate the objects of the Society.

The newspapers, those depositories of incidents and events of daily occurrence, were they carefully preserved, would present a complete history of the civil, political, moral, religious, agricultural and commercial affairs of the State. I am informed that a regular file of the newspa-

pers of this town cannot be found farther back than 1787. Would it not be well for the printers to furnish the Cabinets with a copy of each of their papers, as they are printed, so that hereafter regular files may be preserved?

In March, 1825, the freemen of Newport decided by vote to establish free schools in the town, and a committee in May following, recommended to erect two school-houses, to obtain the Church school-house, and establish three free schools in the town. In 1820, a committee of the town reported on a resolution of the General Assembly of this State, calling on the several towns for information on the subject of free schools, and recommended that the town instruct their representatives in General Assembly, to unite their efforts to procure an act of the Legislature for such a general system of public schools, as in their wisdom they may devise.

On the 14th of July, 1826, the corner stone of the town school-house No. 1, was laid by Lieut. Gov. Charles Collins. The Rev. Mr. Gammell offered a very appropriate prayer on the occasion. A committee was appointed in April, 1826, to investigate and inquire into money said to be due from the town, for, or on the account of school lands. In their report they say, "The undersigned, a committee of said town, appointed on the 3d of Sept. 1825, to inquire into the evidence of the title of the town of Newport to the Newtown or school lands, on the subject of which lands a former committee reported on the 16th of May last, from which report and other representations then made, some of the freemen were induced to believe that the town received the aforesaid land as a gift, on condition to apply the whole income to the education of the youth of said town, and that the town was, in law and equity, bound for the faithful performance of the same; and as the town had sold most of the lands in question soon after the revolutionary war, to pay the debts of the town, they must now make good by taxation the trust to them committed by the donor. It was also reported by that committee, that the town was

indebted to the said education fund, in the sum of \$51,283 34.

The committee, after detailing sundry acts and resolutions of the town, relative to the said Newtown or school lands, gleaned from the old mutilated records of the town, among which is a report of a committee made to the town in 1763, which committee say, "Upon examining the town records, we found that the said land was purchased by the town of one Bartholomew Hunt, the 17th day of December, 1661, for which they gave him in exchange a lot of one hundred acres now lying in Middletown." They say, "Thus it appears that the town in the year 1661 exchanged one hundred acres for the tract since called Newtown or school land, being the property in question. If your committee were allowed in any conjecture respecting the hundred acres exchanged, they submit the subjoined extract from Calender's century sermon, acknowledging, at the same time, that it is but a connection of remote and detached circumstances, resting as much on possibilities as probabilities.

"Mr. Lenthall was admitted a freeman here, August 6th, 1640, and August 20th, Mr. Lenthall was by vote called to keep a public school for the learning of youth, and for his encouragement there was granted to him and his heirs, one hundred acres of land, and four more for an house lot. It was also voted, that one hundred acres should be set forth and appropriated for a school, for the encouragement of the poorer sort to train up their youth in learning, and Mr. Robert Lenthall, while he continues to keep school, is to have the benefit of it.—*Century Sermon, pages 62, 63.*

In March, 1827, the town passed an act to establish a school fund, and appointed three commissioners of said fund, one to go out every year, and a new one to be chosen in his place; who are to receive all donations and bequests hereafter given for public schools, as also the bequest of the late Constant Taber; likewise all monies received for licenses, auction tax and estates taken by the

town for want of known heirs, and directed that the remainder of the said Newtown lots be sold, and the proceeds placed in the fund.

During the January session of 1829, the General Assembly of Rhode-Island appropriated ten thousand dollars annually, for the support of public schools, to be paid over to the several towns, according to their respective population, under the age of sixteen years; and authorizing the several towns to raise by tax in each year, as the majority of the freemen in town-meeting shall judge proper, a sum not exceeding double the amount to be received out of the General Treasury. But one of the schools proposed by this town, has as yet been established, viz. the Mill-street school.

As early as the year 1800, Providence established at the expense of the town the system of public schools, for the instruction of all the children of seven years old and upward. This judicious measure has been the means of introducing into useful life in all the departments of business, hundreds of young men, who are now useful citizens, and who without this means of education, would have grown up in ignorance.* Since the organization of their city government, primary schools have been established in the several wards of the city, for smaller children, taught by females.

In 1826, July 4th, Major John Handy read the Declaration of Independence from the steps of the State-House in Newport, that being the place where fifty years before, it was read to the people by the same gentleman. The steps were decorated with an arch of flowers. Major Handy addressed the assembled multitude as follows :

* By a late act passed by the City Council, the number of public schools is to be increased, a High school established, the salaries of all the teachers are to be raised, and other regulations adopted, for placing the schools in that city in the best possible condition. By this wise and judicious measure, the facilities for acquiring a good education will be extended to all the children in the city. The act is to go into operation in September next.

" My respected fellow-citizens, at your united request, I appear before you in this public station, at an age when it would seem advisable that I should remain a silent spectator of the performances of this day, a day which half a century past, secured to us our independence and prosperity ; and no nation more prosperous ! My own feelings on this occasion I have sacrificed, to gratify your wishes. The recollection of past scenes of the last fifty years, rushes in succession on my mind, with a hope and belief that the mantle of charity will be thrown over my imperfections, and under that impression I shall proceed to the performance of the part required of me."

After the Declaration was read, a hymn was sung in the tune of old hundred, the whole multitude uniting their voices with a fervency and zeal which gave it a most sublime and happy effect.

In 1827, the Newport Association of Mechanics and Manufacturers appointed a committee to receive donations, in books or otherwise, for the purpose of establishing a library for the use of the members, and the apprentices of members. For more than thirty years, the funds of this Society, although never extensive, have been invariably and zealously devoted to the most beneficial purposes. This Association, as far as its resources would permit, has clothed the naked, fed the hungry, and instructed the ignorant. It has ever been rich in disposition to do good, given to hospitality, and distributing to the necessities of the indigent.

On the 9th of June, 1832, the Asiatic Cholera made its appearance at Quebec, in Lower Canada, and progressed so rapidly, that by the morning of the 12th, eighty cases had occurred, more than sixty of which had proved fatal. It has been remarked, that of all the pestilential scourges that have ever afflicted our race, the Asiatic Cholera, in some of its characteristics, was the most remarkable. This dreadful disorder first made its appear-

ance in August, 1817, at Jessore, a considerable city about 100 miles to the Northward of Calcutta. After desolating some of the fairest portions of Asia, it penetrated the Northern part of Europe, and sweeping over a great part of that continent, reached the British Isle.

It has been justly said of this disease, that "It has mastered every variety of climate, has passed mountains and swept over seas, proving equally fatal amid the burning sands of Arabia and on the frozen shores of the white sea; and in the space of less than fifteen years, has swept off more than *fifty millions* of the human race." This dreadful disorder, two or three years previous to its appearance on this continent, was scarcely known to exist by a great portion of the American people. It first began to attract attention here, when it was known to have reached England; and its destructive ravages in Paris created alarm; but the hope was entertained that the Atlantic would prove a barrier to its approach. But when that barrier was passed, and it was known that this destroying angel had begun his march of death on this continent, a general consternation prevailed through the land. It soon reached Albany and New-York from Canada, and shortly spread dismay and death among the inhabitants of many of our cities. At the June session of the Legislature of Rhode-Island, of that year, the Assembly recommended a public fast: the preamble of the act says, "Whereas that scourge to the human race, the Asiatic Cholera, hath made its appearance on this continent, and as no human exertions can effectually resist the approach of this threatening pestilence, which walketh in darkness and wasteth at noon day, it becometh us humbly and devoutly to acknowledge our dependence upon, and to implore the aid of Him in whose hand our breath is, and whose mercy endureth forever; therefore, resolved, that Thursday the 5th day of July next be, and hereby is set apart, as a day of humiliation and prayer to Almighty God, that he would stay this plague, and avert the appalling visitations of his judgments."

But God was better to the people of New-England than all their fears, and this overflowing scourge passed over them, and but few of the inhabitants fell under its power. In Newport and Providence, only a few cases occurred. And it was remarked that the health of our cities, other than this disorder, was better than what is usually the case, the same season of the year.

Newport within a few years past, has greatly advanced in business and prosperity. Many public and private buildings have been erected, and estates purchased by gentlemen from New-York and other places, who make this place their summer retreat; and the application of steam to machinery has enabled her to embark in the manufacture of cotton and woollen cloths. There are now two large cotton mills in successful operation, which together move about 12,000 spindles, and manufacture about 40,000 yards of cloth per week.

Another large brick mill is in successful progress, calculated to run 7,000 spindles; and will soon be in operation. There is also another cotton mill of 1,000 spindles, at present suspended. One establishment is also engaged in the manufacture of woollen goods. These, together with an iron foundry, recently established, and the extensive fortifications commenced by Government in 1825, for the security of our harbor, still in progress, have contributed to increase the population and business of the town.

In reviewing the history of the past, and especially of our own loved Rhode-Island, who is so blinded as not to recognise the footsteps of Omnipotence, and trace on the pages of her history, the finger of God? Two centuries only have passed away, since this whole Western hemisphere, from the shores of the Atlantic to the vast Pacific, presented a dark, cheerless, and interminable wilderness, where wandered the footsteps of the untutored savage and the prowling beast of prey.

Now, from the shores of the Atlantic to the banks of

the majestic Mississippi, we behold smiling villages, splendid and populous cities rising up before us, rivaling the proudest in the old world. We have seen the almost countless tribes of powerful warlike savages, melting away before the march of genius, industry, and enterprise. Here in our own loved "Eden," two centuries ago, the lonely pilgrim gazed upon the Indian wigwam, the instruments of savage warfare, and listened to the horrid yell of barbarism. Yes, on this consecrated spot, where now stands the temple of the living God, in which our fathers worshipped, and where we have listened to songs of salvation and joy, was once heard the deep-toned agony of the expiring captive, and the exulting shout of his barbarous tormentor.

Where now are the original inhabitants, the native "lords of this soil?" Is the little remnant of the Narragansetts, now under the protection of the State, all that remains of this once noble race of men? And are the few acres of land in Charlestown, now in possession of this remnant, all that is left to them of their ancient domain? Canonicus, Myantonomo, friends and benefactors of the Colony, thy nation is now no more; simple sons of the forest, the land of thy fathers has passed into the possession of the descendants of those men, whom when weak, defenceless, and distressed, ye clothed, fed, and protected. And thou too, mighty Philip, who fell fighting for thy native soil, the graves of thy fathers, thy wives and children, and thy own loved Mount Haup, the white man's foot now presses the soil, once trodden by thee.

From the report of a committee on Indian affairs, in Rhode-Island, made to the General Assembly in 1833; "It appears that the whole number of all grades and conditions of the once numerous and warlike tribe of Narragansetts, (the only tribe now existing in the State) at that time, was one hundred and ninety-nine. Of this number, only seven were of genuine Narragansett blood, (several of whom have since died;) fourteen were half

blood, and one hundred and fifty-eight, of different grades less than half blood, and twenty foreigners, who have no connection with the tribe, except by marriage and other promiscuous intercourse." These were represented by the committee at that time, as being in the most wretched and abject condition. The Legislature of the State has since interposed its authority to protect them from the cupidity and depredations of strangers, and guide them in peace to the graves of their fathers.

It ought by us never to be forgotten, but inscribed upon our hearts, and transmitted to the remotest generation, that Rhode-Island was a settlement for conscience sake; that our fathers here sought an asylum of rest, not only for themselves, but for the oppressed of all nations.— Their original compact, their acts of legislation, and the uncompromising firmness with which they maintained the most unlimited toleration and liberty of conscience, fully demonstrate that the first settlers of Rhode-Island, as Mr. Callender very justly observes, "fled not from religion, order, or good government, but to have liberty to worship God and enjoy their own religious opinions and belief."

The same principle that induced the first settlers of New-England to escape from the oppressive power of the lords bishops in England, induced the first settlers of Rhode-Island to escape from the persecuting spirit of the lords brethren in Massachusetts. The great principles of civil and religious freedom seem to have been inscribed by the Author of our being, on the temple of the human heart. Liberty is the spontaneous language of the soul. Every attempt to suppress or control the free and unrestricted exercise of its own volitions, is an act of violence on the laws of our moral nature, and a tyranny against which, it has a right to rebel. And how long soever the human mind may be chained to the iron car of civil or religious despotism, still its inherent, unconquerable spirit scorns to bow in servile homage, and sighs to breathe its native air of freedom.

It has ever been the policy of despotic governments, to secure the wealth and talent of the kingdom, in support of the crown. Conscious of the invincible energies of mind, when enlightened and matured by science; that the perpetuity of the throne was dependent on the prostration of intelligence among the people, property was secured to titles, and science poured her cheering beams on the mind of none, but such as were entitled to offices within the gift of the Crown.

We might also advert to a policy still more degrading and hostile to the dignity and happiness of man. The ambitious and aspiring priest invaded the dominion of the soul, and claimed, as the minister of God, absolute jurisdiction over the creeds and consciences of men. Clothed with ecclesiastical authority, revelling in the smiles of popular favor, and acting under the protection of constitutional power, he exerted an influence by appealing to the passions of degraded, abject mortals, infinitely more to be dreaded than that of the tyrant, who claimed dominion over the physical energies of man. Unconditional submission was demanded, by imposing creeds and spiritual embargoes. Every deviation from the established usages of the church, awakened the unmitigated vengeance of these watchful guardians of her interests.— Every attempt of reformation, or the kindest and gentlest reproof of violated power, was taxed with heresy and rebellion, and served as the watch-word of bigotry and superstition, to nerve the arm and light up the fires of persecution.

From this tribunal there was no appeal. Here the plea of mercy died away unheard. Here the arm of justice became powerless. She peopled her inquisitorial dungeons with the bravest and noblest of her sons, who dared to dispute her infallibility and usurped power. And such was the spirit from which the pilgrim fled, an exile from his home, and sought on the rock of Plymouth, the shores of New-England, a soil congenial with the spirit of religious freedom struggling in the human soul.

But educated as they had been, under a form of government, whose settled policy had pronounced uniformity as indispensable to the perpetuity and prosperity of the church, it is not surprising that the great principles of religious freedom should have been but imperfectly understood, and the spirit of religious toleration but imperfectly improved. The people were not prepared for the development of those great principles, which have since so universally obtained throughout the States of this confederacy.

There was but here and there a mind sufficiently matured to comprehend, or sufficiently elevated and independent to advocate, the principles of civil and religious freedom to their proper and legitimate extent. It was reserved for the banished Williams, and the proscribed and persecuted Clarke, to proclaim to the world that Jesus Christ was king *de facto* in his own kingdom, and that the civil magistrate has no jurisdiction over, and no right to interfere with the creeds or consciences of men.

Rhode-Island, although slandered and reviled by the early historians of New-England, for her want of uniformity in the Christian faith, has lived to witness the triumph of truths first taught by our exiled sires, and the universal prevalence of her own peculiar views of religious toleration throughout the whole extent of our country. The sentiments she then adopted and defended, stand forth before the world an imperishable monument of the wisdom, purity, and integrity of the men who planted the Colony of Rhode-Island. Loaded with obloquy, contempt, and scorn, Rhode-Island stood forth amidst surrounding darkness, in all the peerless majesty of truth, a beacon to guide to the haven of repose, the persecuted and oppressed of all nations. The hallowed influence of her principles has leavened this mighty nation, and neutralized, if not subdued, the dark malignant spirit of bigotry and superstition, of religious intolerance and persecution. Here no haughty, ambitious and aspiring priesthood, revels in the smiles of popular favor,

clothed with imperial authority to invade the dominion of the soul, enforcing their absurd and superstitious dogmas, by the instruments of torture, the horrors of the inquisition, or the immolating fires of persecution.

In was in Rhode-Island, man first breathed the pure untainted air of freedom, and claimed the undisputed, unrestricted right to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience, unmolested. Nor was the spirit which planted the ensign of religious freedom in Rhode-Island, the spirit of fanaticism ; the wild ebullitions of a feverish and distempered imagination, but of enlightened reason and sanctified intellect ; the holy aspirations of mind, influenced and controlled by principles no less commanding than the benevolence of God, which, like the overflowing light of heaven, settles down upon every object capable of its reception.

Our venerable predecessors not only asserted the right to know, but to argue freely any question involving the life, liberty, or happiness of man, and carefully threw around them the only sure bulwark of defence, the freedom of speech and of the press. It was to enjoy these rights, the first community of civilized man was planted in New-England, and for asserting and maintaining them, the first settlers of Rhode-Island were banished, disfranchised, and proscribed by the advocates of uniformity in Massachusetts.

That uniformity which has marked the history of the church, in her unhallowed amalgamation with the world, has ever been hostile to the simple republican principles of Rhode-Island ; hostile to the development of intellect, the aspirations of genius, and the freedom of speech and of the press.

Among the earliest records of legislation in Rhode-Island, we find an act guarding the right of private opinion, and of free discussion. In the preamble to which they say, " That to suffer the civil magistrate to intrude his power into the field of opinions, and restrain the profession or propagation of principles, on the supposition of

their ill tendency, is a dangerous fallacy, which at once destroys all religious liberty ; because he of course being judge of that tendency, will make his own opinions the rule of judgment, and approve or condemn the sentiments of others, only, as they shall square with or differ from his own ; that it is time enough for the rightful purposes of civil government, for its officers to interfere when principles break forth into overt acts against peace and good order—and finally, that truth is great and will prevail, if left to herself ; that she is the proper and sufficient antagonist of error, and has nothing to fear from the conflict, unless by human power disarmed of her natural weapons, free argument and debate.”

Nor were these rights, nor any part of them relinquished by our venerable predecessors, when they entered the confederacy. They surrendered no inalienable right ; they made no compromise of the liberty “ to know, utter, and argue freely,” any of the great principles of civil and religious freedom on which the Colony was founded. And when Rhode-Island subscribed to, and adopted the Constitution of the United States, the voice of freedom echoed from the halls of her convention, proclaiming, “ That there are certain natural rights of which men, when they form a social compact, cannot deprive their posterity ; among which, are the enjoyment of life and liberty, with the means of acquiring, possessing, and protecting property, and pursuing and obtaining happiness and safety. That all men have an equal, natural, inalienable right to the exercise of religion, according to the dictates of their own conscience. That the people have a right to freedom of speech and of writing, and publishing their sentiments ; that freedom of the press is one of the great bulwarks of liberty, and ought not to be violated.

“ Under these impressions,” say they, “ and declaring that the rights aforesaid cannot be abridged, and that these declarations are consistent with the Constitution, we the said delegates, in the name and in the behalf of

the people of the State of Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations, do by these presents assent to and ratify said Constitution." Such were the principles of our sires, and such the principles of their sons. They never blushed to own themselves the bold uncompromising advocates of human rights ; of freedom of speech and of the press ; the right to know, utter, and argue freely, any questions involving the life, liberty, and happiness of man.

And never may the future historian of Rhode-Island record the degeneracy of her sons. As Rhode-Island was the first to assert, so may she be also the last to desert the great principles of civil and religious freedom advocated by the fathers of this Colony, and defended by the persecuted and banished Williams, whose grave, like that of Moses, is unknown to this day.

Under the hallowed and dignified influence of these principles, we have seen this people rise up from a few feeble, dependent, and defenceless Colonies, to independent greatness ; contending successfully with the proudest nations of earth, in agriculture, commerce, and manufactures ; in intelligence, industry, and enterprise. Our prosperity as a nation, has been unexampled in the history of the world.

And for much of our national prosperity and glory, we are indebted to the great principles of liberal legislation adopted as the basis of civil government, by the fathers of Rhode-Island. The principal glory of our nation is, that her government is the government of the people. A people acknowledging no sovereignty, independent of themselves. A people claiming the unrestricted right "to know, utter, and argue freely," every question of popular legislation. If such has been the prosperity of the past, who can justly conceive the future destiny of this people, and the influence they are destined to exert on the nations around them ?

But let us not be beguiled by the deleterious influence of national prosperity, nor lulled into security with the fond expectation that the inestimable blessings by us now

enjoyed, will be perpetuated without an enlightened, virtuous, and sanctified public sentiment; unless God shall be honored by us, and his law be written on our hearts. If our national prosperity shall lead us to forget God—the God in whom our fathers trusted, amidst the dangers of savage warfare, and the perils of the revolution, and to whose gracious Providence they ascribed the achievement of that glorious event—an *Iehabod* will be written on our national escutcheon, and the day of our calamity be at hand.

Should the period ever arrive in our history, when the government of this country shall cease to be the government of the people, when our rulers shall not legislate for the people, and the people tamely bow to the dictation of party, we may trace in that subserviency, mortifying proof of a departure from the original principles of Rhode-Island, and an alarming apostacy from the spirit that dwelt in the bosom of our sires. And are there not fearful indications of an apostacy from those principles? Is it not perceived in the virulence of party warfare? In the almost entire absence of moral principle, in the elective franchise? In the blood that stains the halls of our national legislature, and the impunity with which the constitutional rights of the people are invaded? Do not these things indicate disease in the body politic? A disease which nothing can remedy, but the healthful and redeeming influence of enlightened, sanctified public opinion.

The members of our national legislature are merely the agents of the people, and are properly an index of public opinion. The character of our national legislature is the character of the people; for the government is emphatically the government of the people. So long as public sentiment is corrupted and debased, so long we shall live under a corrupt administration, whoever be the dominant party. But let public sentiment be purified, and our rulers will be pure. No doctrine was ever more fallacious than that advanced by distinguished statesmen

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the present age, that as we are now in the enjoyment of the most free and popular government on earth, nothing is wanting to perpetuate the blessings of that government, but to keep the people properly enlightened on their civil, political, and religious rights, as freemen; in which nothing can be a more dangerous and fatal error. For however indispensable intellectual cultivation may be to the proper exercise of the elective franchise, still our only hope is in God. If he delight in us as a people, our inheritance shall be perpetuated; but if he forsake him and turn away our ear from hearing the voice, the day of our calamity is at hand, and the things that come upon us make haste.

The history of every form of popular government before us, established by the most enlightened and polished nations of earth, affords the most indubitable evidence that no people ever yet possessed sufficient intelligence to govern independently of the controlling and sanctifying influence of our holy religion, long to enjoy the blessings of free and popular government; that all the political capacity and boasted talent of this nation, cannot secure the perpetuation of our free institutions, nor to us the constitutional rights of freemen, unless based on the deep and broad principles of moral righteousness, recognised in the immutable law of the Lord.

Should our rulers ever adopt in the administration of government, the maxims of carnal policy and selfish expediency, instead of the eternal, immutable principles of right, and not be rebuked by the voice of the people, the crown will have fallen from our heads and our glory will have departed. Then shall we proclaim to the world that we have fallen from the high and elevated principles of our sires, and by that apostacy, rendered ourselves unworthy of the blessings of a free and independent government.

No people under heaven can dwell on the pages of their own history, with more supreme satisfaction, than

the people of this State. Rhode-Island is emphatically the birth-place of freedom—

“The home of the brave and the land of the free.”

Here man first breathed the pure, untainted atmosphere of civil and religious freedom. Rhode-Island justly claims, and is entitled to the honor of establishing a form of government in which the great principles of religious toleration and liberty of conscience were fully recognised and secured, while all other States and kingdoms of the world condemned it as the delusive dream of visionary and disordered minds. The principles adopted by the founders of Rhode-Island, and which shall perpetuate their name from generation to generation, were so exclusively original, so entirely beyond the ordinary range of thought in that age, that we feel less disposed to censure than to pity those early historians of New-England, who seem to have been incapable of appreciating the principles of Rhode-Island, or of doing her justice.

Dr. Mather, of Massachusetts, but little more than a century ago, says, “Rhode-Island was occupied by Antinomians, Anabaptists, Quakers, Ranters, and every thing else, but Roman Catholics and Christians; and if any man has lost his religion, he may find it in this general muster of opinions; in this Gawzzim of New-England, this receptacle of the convicts of Jerusalem, and the outcasts of the land.” But could that great and good man again visit our earth, witness the triumph of truth over bigotry and superstition, the universal prevalence of those very sentiments for advocating which, he styles those venerable men “the convicts of Jerusalem and the outcasts of the land,” think you no sigh of regret would stray away from his bosom, that he dipped his pen in gall when writing of those men, whom ages yet unborn, shall delight to honor?

They planted their feet on the eternal, immutable principle of right, and shielded by the purity of their motives, the rectitude of their own conscience, they stood as im-

movable as the rock on the sea shore, where the waves dash and the storm spends its violence in vain. And although such were the sectarian prejudices of the age in which they lived, and such the devotion of the early historians of New-England to the golden calf of uniformity, that many false and malicious slanders are recorded against them, yet succeeding generations have long since done honor to their memory.

Their features are not indeed left on the glowing canvas, nor their form and stature given to the marble.—No splendid sepulchral monument perpetuates their fame, nor even points the passing stranger to the green sod where sleep the mouldering ashes of the illustrious dead; yet their names are inscribed on monuments more durable than parian marble, and their memory shall live till time itself expires.

To the members of this Church,* permit me to say, beloved brethren, the recollections of the past should remind us that the flood of time will soon bear us onward to the bosom of eternity, and ought to awaken in our hearts the liveliest sentiments of gratitude and praise to God, for his paternal and watchful care over the interests of this ancient Church. Those venerable men whose names not only stand on our records, as her founders, but on the long, living annals of fame, with succeeding generations, have passed away; yet for nearly two hundred years, God has never left himself without a witness in this Church. There are, it is true, on the pages of her history, striking illustrations of this truth, that God has set the day of adversity over against that of prosperity. She has often been dressed in sackcloth, and tears have been on the cheek of the daughter of Jerusalem. God has often chastised us for our sins, yet his

* The First Baptist Church. This discourse was delivered in the meeting-house of the North Baptist Church of Newport, as our own house was supposed inadequate to convene the people, and the use of that house being kindly offered for the occasion.

having kindness he has not taken from us, nor suffered his faithfulness to fail.

As the fathers have slept, from age to age, God has raised up others to supply their places and stand before him in the courts of his holiness, to vindicate the honor of his name, and magnify the riches of his grace. The original founders of this Church were pre-eminently pioneers of liberty. They were men of independent greatness and dignity of soul—men who claimed the right to think—to think as men—and thinking, dared to speak.—Men who scorned to bow in obsequious homage to the superstitious dogmas of an aspiring priesthood, although enforced by penal sanctions and legislative power.

They denied the jurisdiction of the civil magistrate over the creeds or consciences of men. They proclaimed that Jesus Christ was king in his own kingdom; the Holy Scriptures his revealed will, and the only rule of moral character and conduct for every human being.—They took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, and suffered fines, imprisonment, and stripes, rather than sacrifice the testimony of a good conscience, in compromising the truth of God, with the inventions or doctrines of men.

Such were the men, and such the principles of the men who had the honor of planting the standard of the cross in this then inhospitable and savage desert, and of constituting the first visible Church of Christ on this Island of the sea. In the character and example of these venerable men, we have constantly before us, all that is lovely and of good report, in the meek and humble spirit of the Christian, and all that is dignified and commanding in the patriot and statesman.

It becomes us, my brethren, seriously to inquire whether we cherish the spirit and emulate the example of our sires. Whether we sustain the character of independent thought and judgment, as did the original founders of this Church. Do we cultivate the same liberality of feeling, the same unbounded charity toward all men, which shines conspicuously on every glowing page of their history?

Do we as conscientiously regard the rights of others, as our own? While we bow with reverence to the supreme authority of the Holy Scriptures, as our only rule of faith and practice, and deny that any man, or body of men possess the right to legislate for us, or prescribe to us the forms and modes of religious worship, let us be slow to tax with heresy the opinions of others, who differ from us in the circumstantialia of religion.

Let that sublime and exalted sentiment, worthy alone of the men who uttered it, still live in this Church, "That truth is the only and sufficient antagonist of error; that she has nothing to fear from the conflict, if left to herself; that truth is great and will prevail, unless by human power disarmed of her natural weapons, free argument and debate." A departure from the original principles of democracy and religion, as here taught by our sires, has been the prolific source of all the mobocracy, misrule, and persecution, which have stained the pages of our nation's history.

Here, my brethren, may the dark, malignant spirit of bigotry and superstition, never find a residence, nor the throne of relentless persecution ever be erected. Let us never be influenced to invade the rights of others, by an unmanly subserviency to the dictations of party, the blind zeal of sectarianism, nor bow in servile homage to popular opinion. As the Pastor of the First Baptist Church in Newport, I should blush for my degeneracy from the principles and spirit of the original founder of this Church, if I did not plant my feet firm on the broad principles of free discussion; and blush for the degeneracy of my brethren, if they did not sustain me in discussing any question, involving the life, liberty, and happiness of man.

No principle of truth and righteousness seeks the darkness of concealment, nor fears the scrutiny of free inquiry and of public opinion; and no sentiment in religion or politics, is worthy our confidence and support, my brethren, which dreads investigation. Finally, brethren, let

us "study the things that make for peace, and things whereby one may edify another." Cultivate "the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace," and "if it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men ; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."

Men, brethren, and fathers, we are reminded by the recollections of the past, that the time of our departure is at hand, and that the season of our mortal probation will soon be closed. What we do for ourselves, our country, or our God, must soon be done. Not a solitary individual of all that lived on this favored Isle one century ago, remains to this day. One after another has passed away, till all are gone. And but very few of those venerable men, who lived in times that tried men's souls, who shared in the perils and conflicts of the revolution, have survived the onward march of time, and mingle with us in the devotions of the day.

Soon the multitude before me, with the speaker, will have descended to the tomb, and our places be occupied by a new troop of succeeding pilgrims. Let us remember, however diversified our political and religious opinions, we belong to the same great family of man, possessing the same common frailties, and requiring the same common sympathies. As Christians, belonging to the same redeemed family, which is to act so conspicuous a part on the great theatre of Heaven, let us put on as the elect of God, bowels of mercy, and cultivate that charity which thinketh no evil, and is not easily provoked : charity which suffereth long and is kind : charity which never faileth.

Let us remember, we live not for ourselves alone, but for posterity and for God. On this beloved Island, two centuries ago to-day, the lonely pilgrim planted the tree of civil and religious freedom. Here they consecrated an altar, for the persecuted and oppressed of all nations ; under the broad and wide-spreading foliage of this hallowed tree, and before the shrine of this consecrated altar, we are permitted to bow before the God of our fathers to-day,

and none to molest us or make us afraid. O may the blessings bequeathed by our sires, and claimed as the inheritance of their sons, be transmitted by us to posterity untarnished, undiminished, and unimpaired. Amen.

Rhodo-Island, the land where the Exile sought rest,
Thou Eden, where wandered the Pilgrim oppress'd ;
Thy name be immortal ! here man was made free,
The oppressed of all nations found refuge in thee.

Here freedom's broad pinions our fathers unfurled,
An ensign to nations, and hope to the world ;
Here both Jew and Gentile have ever enjoyed,
The freedom of conscience, in worshipping God.

Here those ever-loved men, who for conscience tow'rd God,
Were banished and exiled from kindred and blood ;
Were hailed by the red man, the wanderer's friend,
And before the Great Spirit, in harmony bend.

Rhode-Island, thou home of the brave and the free,
All nations shall pay their glad tribute to thee ;
And while distant ages roll silent along,
Thy fame shall be chanted in story and song.

This day shall be honored till freedom expires,
We'll dwell on the name and the deeds of our sires ;
For the blessings bequeathed us, they purchased so dear,
The tribute we offer, is gratitude's tear.

No roar of the cannon salutes the glad morn,
When man was enfranchised and freedom was born ;
But the incense we offer, more grateful shall rise,
It flows from the heart, and ascends to the skies.

GREAT FATHER OF NATIONS, before thee we bow,
Accept our thanksgiving, thy blessing bestow ;
O guide us till labor and sorrow shall cease,
To the grave of our fathers, then bring us in peace.

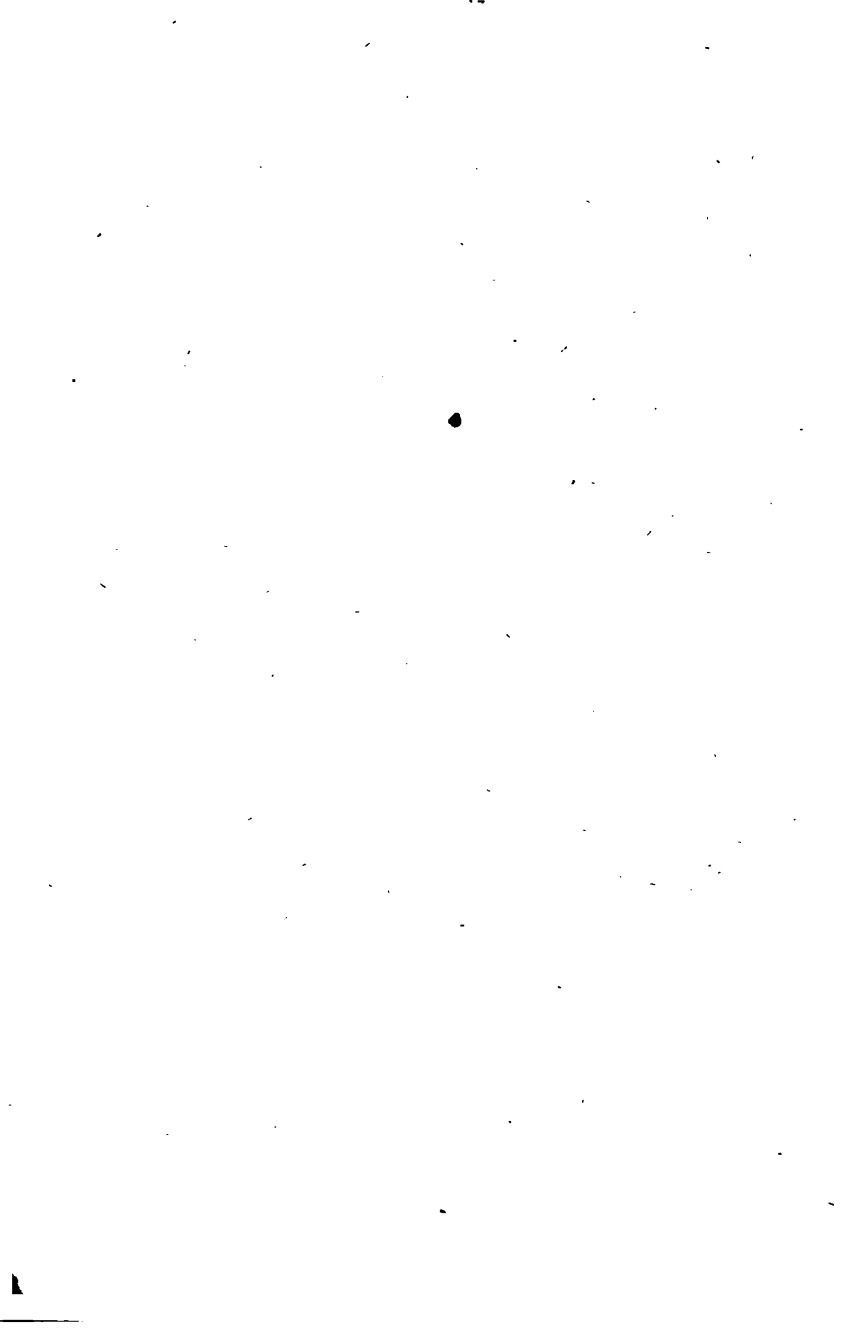
APPENDIX

TO THE

HISTORY OF THE CHURCHES,

ON

RHODE-ISLAND.



APPENDIX.

NOTE A.

The founders of the First Baptist Church in Newport, which was also the Second Baptist Church in New-England, were the first settlers of the Island, and were organized soon after their settlement in Newport. The Rev. Mr. Dumont, in his brief notice of the Congregational Churches in Newport, on the authority of Dr. Styles' MSS. claims this Church as Congregationalist and Pedit-baptist, from its organization in 1640, until 1644, when it became Baptist.— But from the history of New-England, from 1630 to 1649, by John Winthrop, first Governor of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay, it appears virtually to have been Baptist from 1640. He, (Governor Winthrop) says, "In 1638, Mr. Coddington (who had been an assistant from the first coming over, of the government, being with his wife, taken with the fanatical opinions) removed to Aquiday Island, in the Narragansett Bay. Those who were gone with Mrs. Hutchinson to Aquiday, fell into new errors daily. At Providence things grew still worse, for a sister of Mrs. Hutchinson, the wife of one Scott, being infected with Anabaptistry, and going last year to live at Providence, Mr. Williams was taken (or rather emboldened) by her to make open profession thereof, and accordingly was re-baptized by one Holyman, a poor man, late of Salem: then Mr. Williams re-baptized him, and some ten more. They also denied the baptizing of infants, and would have no magistrates.

"1639, the people of Aquiday or Aquedneck, gathered a Church in a very disordered way; for they took some excommunicated persons, and others who were members of the Church of Boston, and not dismissed.

"The Church of Boston sent three brethren with letters to Mr. Coddington, and the rest of our members at Aquiday, to understand their judgment in divers points of religion, formerly maintained by all, or divers of them, and to require them to give account to the Church, of their unwarrantable practice, in communicating with excommunicated persons, &c. When they came, they found that those of them who dwelt at Newport, had joined themselves to a Church there, newly constituted, and therefore refused to hear them as messengers of our Church, or to receive the Church's letters."

From this extract, it appears that this Church, from its organization, rejected infant baptism, the supervision of the civil magistrates, &c., and was in fact, a Baptist Church.

Dr. JOHN CLARKE, a learned and pious man, whose name will be pronounced with veneration from age to age, was its first Pastor.—The first house erected to the worship of God in this town, was built by this Church, soon after its organization, and stood at a place now known by the name of "Green end."

In 1651, Mr. Clarke, with two of his brethren, Obadiah Holmes and John Crandall, went to visit an aged brother by the name of Witter, in Lynn, Mass. Being invited by Mr. Witter to speak to him and friends, the word of life, Mr. Clarke, while preaching a sermon from Rev. iii. 10, at the house of his friend, was arrested by a warrant issued by Robert Bridges, justice of the peace, on Lord's day, July 20, 1651, and on the 22d of the same month, was committed to the common prison, in Boston; and on the 31st of that month, by order of the Court of Assistants, held in Boston, Mr. Clarke and brethren received the following sentence, viz: Mr. Clarke pay £20, or be severely whipped; Mr. Holmes, £30, or be whipped; and Mr. Crandall, £5, or be whipped; and this alone for conscience toward God, in differing from their brethren in Massachusetts, on the subject of infant baptism.

None suffered the whipping, but Mr. Holmes, who received thirty stripes, with the greatest imaginable severity. But from his own narration of the affair, to his friends in London, he could rejoice that he was accounted worthy to suffer for the Lord Jesus, and found that as his day was, so his strength was also.

Mr. Clarke, in the course of his trial, defended himself and brethren, with so much ability, that the Court was greatly embarrassed. And during his subsequent imprisonment, he addressed a letter to the Court, stating that as they had condemned the faith and order,

which he held and practised, and after passing sentence upon him, had said, that he could not maintain the same, against their ministers, and offering him liberty to dispute with them, he accepted the offer.

Mr. Clarke requested the Court to appoint the time when, and the persons with whom, he was to dispute, in the same public place where he was condemned; and doubted not, he says, "that in the strength of the Lord Jesus Christ, he should be able to demonstrate his faith, out of His last will and testament, to which, nothing is to be added, and from which, nothing is to be taken away."

Mr. Clarke also desired the Court, if his request should be granted, that an order or decree to that effect, might be signed by the Secretary, as a public act of the Court by which he had been condemned. The request was granted, a decree issued, and a time appointed for the debate. But among all his persecutors, not one of them had moral courage enough to meet him, at the time and place appointed, and the debate was not had.

After several communications from Mr. Clarke, and replies from the Court, he was released from prison; not by any compromise of the truth on the part of Mr. Clarke, nor by the clemency of his persecutors, but by the interposition of his friends, in the payment of his fine. Before he left Boston, he addressed a note to the honorable body by which he had been condemned, assuring them that if the preliminaries entered into for a public debate, were strictly adhered to, he was ready at any time signified by the Court, to come from Rhode-Island, and test the truth of his sentiments, by the word of God.

In November of the same year, Mr. Clarke, in company with Mr. Williams, went to England, as agent of the Colony of Rhode-Island, where he continued until 1664. He remained in England, to watch the interests of the Colony, and was instrumental in procuring the Charter of 1663, which, down to the present, has secured to the people of Rhode-Island, the blessings of civil and religious freedom, and is therein mentioned, as follows, "Whereas, we have been informed by the humble petition of our trusty and well beloved subject, John Clarke, on the behalf of Benedict Arnold, &c." While in London, Mr. Clarke wrote his narrative of the sufferings of Obadiah Holmes. This book is now very scarce, and nearly out of print. Mr. Benedict says, it is the only piece of his writings which has come down to us.

Mr. Clarke died on the 20th of April, 1676, in the 66th year of his

age. Mr. Backus says, he was born October 8th, 1609, married the daughter of John Harges, Esq. of Bedfordshire, England. In a power of attorney, signed by them, May 12th, 1656, he styles himself John Clarke, physician of London. His first wife died without issue. His second wife was Miss Mary Fletcher, who died April 19th, 1672, leaving an only daughter, who died at the age of 11 years. His third wife was widow Sarah Davis, who survived him. Mr. Clarke, according to his request, was buried between his two wives, in the burial ground on the West side of Tanner-street, which lot he gave the Church. He left also an estate of considerable value in the hands of trustees, empowered to choose their successors, for the relief of the poor and the education of children, according to instructions given in his will; which instructions are, "That in the disposal of that which the Lord hath bestowed upon me, and with which I have now entrusted you, you and your successors shall have special regard and care, to provide for those that fear the Lord; and in all things and at all times, so to discharge the trust which I have reposed in you, as may be most for the glory of God, and the good and benefit of those for whom it is by me especially intended."

Mr. OBADIAH HOLMES was the second Pastor of this Church, and was called to that office very soon after Mr. Clarke sailed for England. In him, the Church found a bold and fearless advocate for truth, a faithful and indefatigable Pastor; which office he continued to discharge until in 1682, he was removed from the scene of his sufferings and toils, by death, in the 76th year of his age. He lies buried on the Holmes farm, in Middletown, where a tomb is erected to his memory. Mr. Holmes was educated at the University of Oxford, England, and seems to have been well adapted to the times in which he lived—times which tried men's souls. The name of Holmes has now become extinct on this Island, but his descendants in the male line, are still numerous in New-Jersey. Some of his descendants in the female line, are still living in Newport. His nearest descendant on the Island, is the wife of Henry Bull, Esq. of this town.

After Mr. Holmes' death, the Church seems to have been without a Pastor, until about the year 1690, when MR. RICHARD DINGLEY became their Pastor. He continued with them only four years, when he left and went to Charleston, South Carolina. After Mr. Dingley left, the Church being few in number, and without any one to administer to them the word of life, they concluded to sit under

the ministry of the Rev. Mr. Hiscox, of the Sabbatarian Church. In 1711, this little band were again permitted to go up to the Zion they loved, and sit under the ministry of the Rev. WILLIAM PECKHAM, who was ordained to the pastoral care of the Church that same year. Mr. Peckham continued faithfully to discharge the duties of his office, until the increasing infirmities of age rendered assistance indispensable to his own happiness, and the prosperity of the Church.

In May, 1718, it appears from the records of the Church, that a Mr. DANIEL WHITE was received to her fellowship by a letter from a Church in England, and was soon after invited by the Church, to assist Elder Peckham, in the discharge of his ministerial services. But he proved a most unfortunate acquisition to the Church; for he soon created or headed a faction, which subsequently (after nearly two years of great trial) resulted in a division of the Church, and the establishment of a separate meeting, under the administration of Mr. White. In 1724, a meeting-house was erected for Mr. White, in which he continued to hold meetings for about four years; when having but one individual member of his Church left, he sold the meeting-house, and left the place.

In 1725, the Church invited Mr. JOHN COMER to become the colleague of Mr. Peckham, which invitation he accepted, and entered upon the duties of his office the following spring. Mr. Comer was a man of talents, and eminently successful as a minister of Jesus.—Under his ministry the number of the Church was increased from seventeen to fifty-one. He also commenced the records of the Church, and to him we are indebted for much of her early history. But the prosperity and happiness of the Church, under Mr. Comer's administration, was soon interrupted by a sermon delivered by him on Lord's day, Nov. 17, 1728, in which he maintained the doctrine of imposition of hands on baptized believers, as indispensable to Church membership and communion at the Lord's table. This discourse gave great uneasiness to the Church, and finally resulted in the separation of the Pastor and his flock. On the 8th of January, 1729, Mr. Comer was dismissed from his pastoral charge, by letter. The records of the Church say, that "Mr. Comer was dismissed, not so much on account of the doctrine maintained, in the offensive discourse, as the spirit in which it was delivered and defended."—But whatever fault Mr. Comer committed in preaching or defending the doctrine of that sermon, was amply and nobly atoned for, by the Christian spirit manifested by him, when about to leave

Newport. For, unwilling to leave the Church over which he had once exercised the office of a Pastor, without seeking a reconciliation, he requested them to call a Church meeting; at which on the 28th of June, 1731, he acknowledged his error to the Church, and humbly asked them to forgive him; which acknowledgment was received in the same spirit of Christian meekness, by the Church; and after a pleasant interview, which was conducted as became the disciples of the meek and lowly Jesus, and each producing all the papers which had been written on either side, for the purpose of destroying them, and after a most fervent and affectionate prayer by Mr. Comer, they parted with their late Pastor in love and peace.

The sixth Pastor of this Church, was the Rev. JOHN CALENDER, nephew of the Rev. Elisha Calender, of the old Baptist Church, in Boston. Mr. Calender was a native of Boston, and received his education at Harvard University, in Cambridge. He graduated at an early age, united with the Baptist Church in Boston, and was soon after licensed to preach the Gospel. He accepted the invitation of this Church to become their Pastor on the 4th of July, 1731, and on the 13th day of October following, was set apart to that office, by fasting and prayer, and the imposition of hands. The Churches of Boston and Swanzey, by their ministers and messengers, were invited to participate in the services.

On the 21st of June, 1732, Mr. William Peckham was ordained to the office of a Deacon. And as their beloved and venerable Pastor, Elder William Peckham, sen. by reason of his advanced age and infirmities, could not be present to officiate at the ordination, unless held at his house, it was decided by the Church, that the ceremony should be performed there. After the ordination, and by the special request of Elder Peckham, the Lord's supper was administered. After which, dissolving in love, at the tender recollections which pressed upon him, that ancient and venerable man of God, with eternity just before him, rose to give his last farewell, and pronounce his dying blessing on the Church. The congregation was overpowered with the sweetly oppressive blessedness of the divine presence and glory. No language could adequately express the moral grandeur of that solemn and imposing scene. To see that venerable and beloved Pastor, whose faithfulness and devotion to their welfare, they had witnessed for so many years, now standing on the verge of eternity, and breathing out the most fervent

invocation to God, for their future prosperity, was a scene inexpressibly thrilling and interesting.*

Mr. Calender's ministry in this Church, during a period of almost 17 years, was very evidently attended with the approbation and blessing of God. For by his prudent, judicious, and affectionate conduct as a Pastor, his familiar and endearing intercourse with the people of his charge, together with the faithfulness and zeal with which he preached to them the word of life, the Church enjoyed great quietness and rest; walked together in the fear of the Lord, in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, and was multiplied.

Like his Divine Master, Mr. Calender was poor in this world's goods, but rich in faith, and heir to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. His passage through this vale of tears, though not protracted to great length, was one of adversity, sickness, and pain. But with a mind elevated and subdued by the controlling and sanctifying influences of our holy religion, he traced in his afflictions, the kindness of a Father's love, and met the ills of life, with patient resignation and Christian hope. His departure from the toils and sorrows of earth, to that rest which remains for the people of God, was on the 26th of January, 1748, in the 42d year of his age. If that life be long, which answers life's great end; if wisdom be grey hairs and an unspotted life, old age; then did this truly good man come down to his grave, full of years. Mr. Calender not only lived to secure the reputation of the scholar and gentleman, but what is infinitely more valuable, the reputation of a liberal minded, pious and devoted Christian.

In March, 1738, he preached his celebrated Historical Sermon, embracing the civil and religious affairs of the Colony, from the commencement of the first settlement on the Island, to the close of the first century. This Discourse does honor to Mr. Calender, and the Church over which he presided. It breathes the same spirit of religious freedom and liberality of sentiment, that immortalized the names of Clarke, Coddington, and their associates. His discourse, occasioned by the death of the Rev. Nathaniel Clapp, Pastor of the First Congregational Church in Newport, with several others, preached on special occasions, was published.

His remains lie in the common burial place, in Newport, in about

* I find no record of Elder Peckham's death.

a North East direction from the gate, in Farewell-street, where a tomb has been erected, with an inscription, by Dr. Moffett. The tomb erected to the memory of the beloved Calender, is now much decayed and fallen down. It should be the immediate care of the First Baptist Church in Newport, to see that it be repaired: that generations yet to come, may point the passing stranger to the spot, where sleep the mouldering ashes of that good man, who wrote the first and as yet, the only History of Rhode-Island.

Mr. Calender was succeeded in the pastoral office of the Church, by the Rev. EDWARD UPHAM, who continued with them for more than twenty years, when by death he was removed from his labors, to that rest that remains for the people of God.

The eighth Pastor of this Church, was the Rev. ERASMUS KELLEY. He accepted the call of the Church, in 1771, and continued in the faithful discharge of his duty, until 1778, when the meeting-house being used as a barrack for the troops of his sacred majesty, King George, he removed to Warren. But in a few months, the enemy followed him to that place and burnt the house in which he resided, and destroyed his valuable furniture. After which, during the continuance of the war, he resided with his family in Pennsylvania, his native State. In 1784, Mr. Kelley returned to Newport, and resumed his pastoral labors among his flock. But they were however, of but short continuance, for on the 7th of Nov. following, he was removed by death.

The ninth Pastor was the Rev. BENJAMIN FOSTER, D.D. Mr. Foster commenced his labors with this Church on the first Sabbath of January, 1785, and on the 5th of June following, was installed to the pastoral office. Three years after, he received and accepted a call from the First Baptist Church in New-York, to become their Pastor, and removed his family to that place, the autumn of the same year. He continued his labors in that Church, with great fidelity and success, until his death. He died of the yellow fever, August, 1793. Mr. Foster was a man of superior intellect, and of high literary attainments. Mr. Benedict says, in the Greek, Hebrew, and Chaldean languages, he left few superiors.

The following is the inscription on his tomb-stone, in the Baptist burial ground, in the city of New-York:—"As a Scholar and Divine, he excelled: as a Preacher, he was eminent: as a Christian, he shone conspicuously: in his piety, he was fervent. The Church was comforted by his life, and now laments his death."

In 1789, the Rev. MICHAEL EDDY received and accepted the call of the Church, to become their Pastor, the duties of which office, he continued to discharge for almost half a century. In 1833, sickness and the increasing infirmities of age, pressing heavily upon him; the Rev. JAMES M'KENZIE, a native of Newport, and formerly a member of the Church, was invited to become the colleague of Elder Eddy, in which station he continued for one year, when he left to take charge of the Fourth Baptist Church in Newport. Mr. Eddy departed this life on the 3d day of June, 1835, in the 75th year of his age, respected and beloved by his Church and congregation, and by the inhabitants of Newport, with whom he had lived for so many years.

During Mr. Eddy's ministry, the Church was frequently blest with seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. The years of 1806-8-16, and 20, will long be remembered, as years of the right hand of the Most High. In that of 1820, more than one hundred were added to the Church. During Mr. Eddy's labors of love, in this Church, he baptized more than five hundred; many of whom have been removed by death, and others remain unto this day.

The present Pastor of the Church was installed March 11th, 1835. In the retrospect of the past, we can say, God has been our refuge and strength, a very present help in time of trouble. And although our prospects have been sometimes dark and gloomy, yet He has ever been ready to bless, and we have often sung, "Lo! this is our God! we have waited for him; he will save us—this is the Lord, we have waited for him; we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation."

NOTE B.

In 1656, twenty-one members of the First Baptist Church in Newport, withdrew themselves, and formed the Second Baptist Church in this town. These brethren objected to the original Church, in her use of psalmody, restraints upon the liberty of prophesying, and holding the laying on of hands a matter of indifference, which they regarded as binding on all believers.

The first Pastor of this Church, was the Rev. WILLIAM VAUGHN, who continued with them till his death in 1677.

The second was the Rev. THOMAS BAKER, who subsequently settled in North-Kingstown. He was succeeded by the Rev. JOHN HARDEN, who died in 1700.

The fourth Pastor was the Rev. JAMES CLARKE, nephew of Dr. John Clarke. He was assisted in the discharge of his pastoral duties by the Rev. DANIEL WIGHTMAN, who succeeded him in that office, in 1704.

In 1729, Mr. JOHN COMER became a member of this Church, and as Mr. Wightman was now aged and infirm, the Church invited Mr. Comer to assist him in the ministry. And although he remained with the Church a short time only, his labors were greatly blest in the edification of the Church, and the salvation of sinners. The Lord gave him many souls, as seals of his ministry, and stars in his future crown of rejoicing.

Mr. Clarke died in 1736, aged 87 years. After the death of Mr. Clarke, the Church invited Mr. NICHOLAS EYERS to become the colleague of Mr. Wightman, in which he continued until Mr. Wightman's death, in 1750. Mr. Eyers died in 1759. Previous to his death, for several years, he had enjoyed the labors of one of his own flock, as an assistant in the ministry; one whom he had pointed to the Lamb of God, as the only Saviour; one whom he had buried with Christ in baptism, and fed with knowledge and understanding. This was the Rev. GARDINER THURSTON, who at the death of Mr. Eyers, succeeded to the pastoral charge of the Church. Mr. Thurston continued to discharge the duties of a minister of Jesus Christ, with great faithfulness and success, for more than forty years, when the increasing infirmities of age pressed heavily upon him, and he applied to his beloved flock, to procure an assistant,

to relieve him from some part of his arduous labors. He was assisted for a few months by the Rev. THOMAS DUNN. After him, by the Rev. WILLIAM PECKHAM, a licentiate, and member of the Church.

In 1799, the Rev. WILLIAM COLLIER, of Boston, was invited to labor in the Church, as the assistant of Mr. Thurston. But in 1801, the venerable man of God knowing that the time of his departure was at hand, earnestly entreated his people to procure a Pastor, and release him from the responsibilities of his charge. Accordingly, in May of that year, he was permitted to witness the settlement of the Rev. JOSHUA BRADLEY, as his successor in the pastoral office. Mr. Thurston died the following year, aged 82. "The memory of the just is blessed."

Mr. Bradley continued to labor with this Church, for about six years, when he removed to Connecticut, to the great grief of his flock. His labors were signally blessed of God, in the conversion of souls; and during his ministry, the Church enjoyed great prosperity, and great accessions were made to her numbers.

In October, 1807, the Rev. Mr. GIBSON became their Pastor; which office he held till March, 1815, when he requested and received a discharge from the pastoral charge of the Church.

The Rev. SAMUEL WYDOWN was his successor, who continued with the Church until 1817, when the Rev. Mr. ELTON was invited to become its Pastor, and was ordained to that office, June 11th, of the same year. Under the ministry of Mr. Elton, the Church continued to prosper, and during the year 1820, more than one hundred were added by baptism. In 1822, Mr. Elton (having received a call from the Baptist Church in Windsor, Vermont,) requested a dismissal, which was reluctantly granted, by his affectionate people.

Mr. Elton was succeeded in the pastoral office by the late lamented GAMMELL, December 10th, 1823. Mr. Gammell's career was short, (but brilliant;) for on the 31st of May, 1827, he suddenly expired, in the full hope of a glorious immortality. His death was not only very deeply afflicting to his family, and the Church of God, but lamented by thousands who had with pleasure hung upon his lips, as the ambassador of Heaven, and listened to the impassioned eloquence of his soul.

On the 27th of September following, the Rev. JOHN O. CHOUTER.

was inducted into the pastoral office of the Church, by the usual ceremony of ordination. On the 3d of January, 1833, Mr. Choules tendered his resignation as Pastor of the Church, which resignation was accepted on the 25th of the same month.

In December, 1833, Rev. JOHN DOWLING was called to take the pastoral charge of the Church, which call he accepted, and on the 27th of March following, he was publicly recognised as their Pastor, by installation. On the 20th of July, 1836, Mr. Dowling tendered his resignation, in order to take the pastoral charge of the West Baptist Church, in the city of New-York, which resignation was accepted.

The present Pastor, Rev. TIMOTHY G. FREEMAN, was invited to become the Pastor of this Church, on the 15th of January, 1837, which invitation he accepted, and was set apart to that office, on the 16th of March following, by the imposition of hands and of prayer.

This Church has recently erected a very large and splendid house of worship, which together with the organ, independent of the lot, cost nearly eighteen thousand dollars.

NOTE C.

The exact time when the Society of Friends or Quakers, formed themselves into a body for Church government, cannot now be exactly stated. When William Leddra and Marmaduke Stevenson came to Newport, in the year 1658 or 9, they found their brethren here; and Daniel Gould, the first minister they have any account of in Newport, went to Boston with them, whom they hanged, and severely whipped Gould at the carriage of a great gun, as appears by his account written by himself, and published in the year 1700

The first records of the monthly meeting, commenced in the year 1676. But it is evident that they were formed into a Society previous to that time, as John Burnyeat, a minister here from England, speaks in his journal of attending a yearly meeting in Newport, as early as the year 1671, and George Fox, the following year, 1672, which was held at the house of William Coddington. The first records of the yearly meeting commence in the year 1683, by all which, a tradition existing among them appears to be true, that the first records were burned in the house in which they were kept, and accounts for their not being able to determine the exact time they were founded as a Society.

In early times, the Society was very large, about one half the population in 1700, being of that persuasion, and in that year they built the present meeting-house,* in which they now worship.—There have been many ministers, and other conspicuous members of that Society, who lived in Newport and its vicinity. The most distinguished ministers who appeared among them, were Daniel Gould, Jacob Mott, John Hewlett, Ebenezer Slocum, Thomas Cornell, Samuel Freeborn, William Anthony, Gov. John Wanton, Joseph Wanton, Dr. Clarke Rodman, grand-father of the present Clarke Rodman, John Casey, Christopher Townsend, Joseph Mitchell, Isaac Lawton, and David Buffum, with many others.

* Mr. Bull says, there was a Friends' meeting-house in Newport, long before this was built, probably soon after they came to this country. It stood on the East side of Farewell-street, opposite the Coddington burial-place—which house was taken down in 1705—and some of the materials worked into that which is now the North room of the present meeting-house, which extends 30 feet North of the main building.

Since the revolutionary war, the Society has decreased in Newport, and on the Island. There are, however, a respectable number, who meet both at Newport and at Portsmouth, and hold regular meetings in the middle of the week. Previous to the war of the revolution, the present house was well filled, above and below; but at that time, many of its most wealthy members removed to other places, and never returned—and it is now remarked, that there are few settlements of Friends in the State of Vermont, and the Northern and Western parts of New-York, where the seed of Rhode-Island is not to be found. And it is now easily shown, that within forty years, more of the Society have removed from the Island, than now dwell upon it.

This Society, at one period of the settlement, say from 1660, down to 1760, were very influential in the government of the Colony. A large proportion of its Governors and other officers, were of that denomination. Among whom may be enumerated William Coddington, Nicholas Easton, John Easton, Walter Clarke, and Henry Bull, who died the last of the first settlers; and John Wanton, Gideon Wanton, and Gov. Hopkins, were all members of the Society. John Wanton was a very eminent and popular preacher among them. But, it was found that such offices were inconsistent with their profession of religion, and of latter years it is uncommon for them to be elected, where military or criminal questions are involved.

Under the government of this State, they have from the beginning enjoyed far greater civil and religious liberty, than in any other. Here, their yearly meeting is held, which brings together a large concourse of that body, from different parts of New-England, and frequently, there are attendants from many other parts of the United States, as well as occasional visitors from England and Ireland. On these occasions, no people receive a more respectful attention, and every class of Christians is glad to see them coming into town, in June, when their annual meeting is held. They have for some time contemplated removing the yearly meeting to some place where there are more of the Society; but it is apprehended, that there is no place in New-England, where their rights and privileges will be better secured, or where the mass of the population will so cordially receive them.

That part of Newport called Easton's Point, was once wholly the property of the Society of Friends, and till within forty or fifty years, was under quit-rent to them. Since that time, they have sold

out the greater part of the quit-rented lots. There are, however, some unsold; and about twenty acres that have been used for meadows and gardens, still remain their property.

The Point was originally the property of Gov. Nicholas Easton, who, on his marriage with Ann Clayton, gave it by deed to her, and confirmed it in his will to her, as his wife. In the year 1694, a certain William Edwards, a member of the Society, gave by will to his executors, who were Daniel Gould, Edward Thurston, William James, and John Lurkett, the residue of his estate, for the benefit of that Society. With a part of which residue, in the year 1698, they purchased of Ann Bull, widow of Gov. Henry Bull, and previously widow of Nicholas Easton, the Point farm, consisting of about sixty-five acres, part of which in 1714, they laid out in house lots, and made a second division in 1725, which they rented out at a very low rate. The Society has the original plat, and regular minutes of the proprietors, ever since.

NOTE D.

The Sabbatarian, or Seventh-day Baptist Church, was constituted in 1671. Several members of Mr. Clarke's Church, entertaining conscientious scruples in regard to keeping the first day of the week as the Christian Sabbath, withdrew from the fellowship of that Church, and organized themselves into a Church, with Mr. WILLIAM HISCOX as their leader. He died May 24th, 1704, in the 66th year of his age.

The second Pastor of this Church, was Rev. WILLIAM GIBSON, of London. He died March 12th, 1717, aged 79. He was succeeded by Rev. JOSEPH CRANDALL, who died in 1737. Their next Pastor was Rev. JOSEPH MAXON. He was ordained as an evangelist at Newport, October 8th, 1732, and preached alternately at Newport and Westerly, serving the Church with great faithfulness, until his death, which occurred September, 1748.

Elder JOHN MAXSON was the fifth Pastor of this Church, from the year 1754, until his death, in March, 1778.

Mr. EBENEZER DAVID, who was converted in Brown University, during his collegiate course of study, became a member of this Church, and was ordained May 31st, 1775. He accepted the place of Chaplain in the army, in which place he died, near Philadelphia, March 19th, 1778.

Mr. WILLIAM BLISS became their next Pastor. He was admitted a member of the Church, June, 1764, was ordained an evangelist at Hopkinton, December 7th, 1779, and was installed Pastor of this Church, December 25th, 1780. He continued faithfully to discharge the duties of his office, until his death, which occurred May 4th, 1808, aged 81 years.

The Rev. HENRY BURDICK, the present Pastor of the Church, was admitted as a member of this body, January 30th, 1802, and was ordained to the work of the Gospel ministry, December 10th, 1807.

This Church previous to the revolutionary war, embraced a number of talented and influential men. The Hon. Samuel Ward, who for several years was Governor of Rhode-Island, and a member also of the Continental Congress, belonged to this Church. But the war

scattered them, and greatly interrupted their prosperity. Since that time, this Church has never been able to recover her former eminence, and for several years past having been but few, if any additions, the Church has greatly decreased, so that its present number is very small.

NOTE E.

Of the first settlement of the Jews in this town, we are able to furnish only a brief and imperfect history. It is to be regretted that materials for transmitting to posterity the history of that ancient and honorable race of men, who once formed so large and respectable a portion of the population of Newport, have not been preserved.—There is now, in the Town Clerk's office, the copy of a deed (certified by William Coddington, Town Clerk, October 19th, 1677, Book No. 3, page 11, of land evidences) of a certain lot of land, thirty feet square, sold by Nathaniel Dickens, to Mordicai Campanall and Moses Packeckoe, for a burial-place for the Jews. This deed is dated Feb. 28th, 1677, which shows that some of the descendants of Abraham found an asylum of rest from oppression and persecution, on this Island of the sea, at an early period of the settlement. How long prior to the purchase of the burial lot, we have no means of ascertaining. The first Jews who settled in Newport, were of Dutch extract, from Curraso, and were not possessed of the wealth, intelligence, or enterprise, which so eminently distinguished those who subsequently settled in this town; which, with the smallness of their number, accounts for the lapse of time from the first Jewish settlement in Newport, to the erection of the Synagogue. It is not probable, however, that during all this time, they maintained no regular form of public worship; and there is a tradition amongst the most ancient people of Newport, now living, that from their earliest settlement here, public religious worship was regularly maintained in private houses.

Between the years of 1750–60, many families of wealth and distinction came to this country from Spain and Portugal, and settled in Newport, which contributed largely to the intelligence and commercial prosperity of the town. Many of them engaged in the mercantile profession, and Mr. Aaron Lopez owned more shipping, and was more extensively engaged in merchandise, than any other man in Newport. The present Synagogue was erected in 1762, and dedicated to the God of Abraham, with great pomp and magnificence, according to Jewish custom, December 2d, 1763.*

* The Synagogue was thronged with worshippers from its erection until the war commenced, and the scriptures were publicly read, and the God of Abraham worshipped in the Hebrew language in Newport, by more than three hundred of the dispersed house of Israel, up to that time.

About this time, 1763, and long after, flourished the distinguished families of Lopez, Rivera, Pollock, Levi, Hart, and their late respected priest, Isaac Touro. Abraham Touro, son of the priest, died in Boston, in the year 1822, leaving a fund of 10,000 dollars for the support of the Synagogue and burial-place, both of which are kept in good order. He also left 5,000 dollars for the purpose of keeping the street in repair, on which they front.

The revolutionary war, so disastrous to the commercial interest and prosperity of Newport, induced the greater part of them to leave the town; and after the conclusion of the war, the remnant that was left gradually declined, until not an individual now remains. Moses Lopez, nephew of the celebrated Aaron Lopez, was the last resident Jew in Newport. A few years previous to his death, he removed to New-York. His remains were brought to Newport, and interred by the side of his brother Jacob, in the burial-place of their fathers. Moses Lopez was a man of no common abilities—an honorable merchant, deep in the mathematics, and of uncommon mechanical skill. He was pleasant and interesting in conversation, and an ingenious defender of his religious belief.

There is one incident in the history of the late and respectable Jacob R. Rivera, which ought to be recorded as highly honorable to himself, and the society of Jews to which he belonged. At one period of his life, he failed in business, in which he was extensively engaged as a merchant; but after a few years of successful enterprise, he recovered his fortune, and made a dinner party, to which he invited all his creditors, who, when they sat down at the table, each one found the exact sum of money due him, with the interest calculated to the day. The society of Jews generally, who settled in this town, have left a reputation for integrity and uprightness, which should perpetuate their memory from generation to generation.

NOTE F.

Trinity Church, in Newport, was formed near the close of the 17th century. About the year 1698, the worship of God according to the rites of the Church of England, was commenced in Rhode-Island. The name of the Rev. Mr. LOCKYER appears as the first Clergyman of the English Church, who performed divine service in Newport, though it is uncertain how long his ministry here was continued.

In 1702, a handsome Church had been built, finished without and within, containing in all forty-six pews, thirty-six below, and ten in the gallery. The same year, the Church wardens wrote to the Bishop of London, and to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in foreign parts, for aid "towards promoting their Church." And in 1704, the Society in England appointed the Rev. JAMES HONEYMAN, their missionary here, who discharged the duties of his mission with great diligence and success, for nearly half a century.

In 1724, the Episcopal congregation in Newport had grown too numerous to be accommodated with seats in the old Church, and it was proposed to erect a new one. The new building which was erected the following year, and has since been lengthened, is the one now occupied by the congregation of Trinity Church, and is in excellent repair. The old Church was given to the people of the town of Warwick, who had no Church of their own.

For nearly two years, from the latter part of the year 1728, the Rev. Mr. Honeyman derived much valuable assistance from the celebrated Dr. BERKLEY, afterward Bishop of Cloyne, then residing on Rhode-Island, a short distance from Newport. During his residence in this vicinity, Dean Berkley preached every Sabbath, and aided the rector in his parochial duties. After he had returned to England, in the year 1733, he presented Mr. Honeyman's congregation with a fine toned, excellent organ, which still retains its place in Trinity Church.

On the arrival of the organ, "at a vestry, held at Trinity Church, in Newport, on Monday the 25th day of February, 1733, the Rev. Mr. Honeyman was desired to draw up a letter of thanks to the Rev. Mr. Dean Berkley, for his generous present of an organ to

this Church; and likewise a letter of thanks to Mr. Henry Newman, for his care about, and shipping the same, in order to be sent to England as soon as conveniently may be." And subsequently, "at a vestry, held in Trinity Church, in Newport, on Friday the 8th day of March, 1733," it was "voted that the letter of thanks to the Rev. Mr. Dean Berkley, for his present of the organ to this Church, and likewise the letter of thanks to Mr. Henry Newman, for his care and trouble in getting the same done, and shipping thereof, drawn up by the Rev. Mr. Honeyman, is approved of and signed in this vestry, and ordered to be sent home forthwith."

The same year, in the month of August following, the thanks of the vestry were returned to Jahleel Brenton, Esq. for his "generous donation" of the clock now in the tower of this Church. In 1750, the Rev. Mr. Honeyman having departed this life, the Rev. JEREMIAH LEARNING, who had in the year 1748, been received as school-master, catechist, and assistant minister, was requested to officiate as minister of Trinity Church, until the congregation could be supplied with a settled minister.

The Rev. THOMAS POLLEN arrived from England in May, 1754, having been appointed by the Society for propagating the Gospel, their missionary for Trinity Church. He was on his arrival, cordially welcomed by the congregation, who directed a letter of thanks to the Society, for sending them a minister so satisfactory to them. The pastoral relation so conspicuously commenced, was however of no long duration. For some difficulties arising between himself and his flock, he decided to leave them in Nov. 1760, little more than six years from his first arrival at Newport.

Mr. Pollen was immediately succeeded by the Rev. MARMADUKE BROWN, being unanimously elected to officiate as minister of Trinity Church. A committee was appointed to write to the Society in England, "desiring their favor in settling him as their missionary to them." On the 18th of January, 1762, it was voted that the "Church might be enlarged to the Eastward," provided that those gentlemen who were willing to undertake it, would give security to the Church, that they would make the addition without its being any expense to the other members of the Church. The Church was accordingly enlarged, so as to admit of the erection of about thirty additional pews below, besides the corresponding ones in the galleries. The present steeple was built in 1768.

A successful application was made to the General Assembly of Rhode-Island, in 1769, for an act of incorporation; and a "set of rules and regulations for the Church," adopted, "agreeable to the charter granted by the Colony."

Mr. Brown continued his connexion with Trinity Church, until his death, which took place on the 16th of March, 1771.

After the death of Mr. Brown, the attention of Trinity Church congregation was directed to the Rev. GEORGE BISSET, who had since the year 1767, been engaged as schoolmaster and assistant minister. They voted "that the Rev. Mr. Bisset be requested to officiate as minister of the Church, "That a letter be written to the Society informing them of the death of their worthy minister, the late Rev. Mr. Brown, and soliciting the continuation of the mission," and "that the Rev. Mr. Bisset be recommended as a suitable person to succeed Mr. Brown and Mr. Honeyman." The Society for propagating the Gospel in foreign parts, refusing to give any further salary to the minister of Trinity Church, his entire support devolved on the congregation, who on the 28th of October, 1771, unanimously chose the Rev. Mr. Bisset for their minister.

May 11th, 1772, the Rev. WILLARD WHEELER was chosen assistant minister and schoolmaster; but not giving satisfaction with regard to his school, he was allowed to discontinue his services after the 8th of April, 1776.

After a vacancy of many years, occasioned by the removal of the Rev. Mr. Bisset, who left Newport with the British troops, in the unhappy period of the revolutionary war; a meeting of the Trinity Church congregation was held, August 27th, 1786, which resulted in the settlement of the Rev. JAMES SAYRE, of Fairfield, Conn., as their rector. Mr. Sayer's ministry, though of short duration in the Church, appears from the number of baptisms recorded, and other parochial notices, to have been for a time at least, very successful. But divisions arising in the congregation, it was brought to a close in a little more than two years, when the Church was again vacant, until the 28th of December, 1789.

The Rev. WILLIAM SMITH, of St. Paul's Church, in Narragansett, at that time succeeded Mr. Sayre, as rector of Trinity Church.—Had Mr. Smith's prudence been equal to his talents and learning, he might, with the divine blessing, have been instrumental in healing the unhappy divisions among his people, and restoring the Church to her former prosperity. The time, however, had not

come for this Church to arise from her depression, and put on the garments of glory and beauty. Mr. Smith's pastoral charge and residence in Newport, terminated April 12th, 1797; when having informed the congregation that he had accepted a call to the Church at Norwalk, Conn., he embarked with his family, "to enter on his new charge."

If in consequence of the long vacancy and unfavorable changes in society, which had been occasioned by the American revolution, and the unprofitable dissensions which had still more recently occurred, the congregation of Trinity Church was in a divided and scattered condition, toward the close of the year 1797, the year 1798 commenced under happier auspices, and proved both to the Church and their new rector, the commencement of a "series of years of mutual satisfaction, comfort, and joy. It was on Sunday, the 7th day of January, 1798, that the Rev. THEODORE DEHON, afterward Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina, preached his first sermon in Trinity Church, after he had accepted the office of rector.

Mr. Dehon, a native of Boston, and a graduate of Harvard University, had a few days before completed his 21st year; and so favorable was the impression made by his first discourse, "upon commencing the duties of his ministry," that the vestry unanimously requested "the favor of a copy thereof for the press." By the prudent, judicious, and conciliating conduct of the rector, the differences and misunderstandings which had so long existed in the Church, were entirely removed. The people became united, and the harmony of the congregation was never again interrupted while he remained among them. Mr. Dehon was occasionally assisted in the duties of the ministry, 1st, by the Rev. ABRAHAM BRONSON; 2d, by the Rev. CLEMENT MERRIAM; 3d, by the Rev. JOHN WARD; which last Rev. gentleman also taught the Trinity Church school.

Mr. Dehon continued in charge of Trinity Church about twelve years, during which time, the parsonage house was repaired and enlarged, the Church school-house was erected, and the vestry room was built at the North East corner of the Church. The piety, talents, and eloquence of this truly Christian minister, his undiminished popularity, and the flourishing state of his congregation, led to repeated calls from other Churches. And in the winter of 1809-10, to the deep regret of his flock at Newport, Dr. Dehon resigned the charge of their Church, and accepted the rectorship of St. Michael's Church, in Charleston, South Carolina.

Trinity Church being again without a rector, the committee appointed, wrote to the Rt. Rev. Dr. JARVIS, Bishop of Connecticut, who recommended the Rev. SALMON WHEATON, then assistant minister of Trinity Church, New-Haven, as a suitable person to fill the vacancy occasioned by the resignation of the Rev. Dr. Dehon; and in July, 1810, he was unanimously chosen rector of Trinity Church in Newport, but was prevented by his engagements at New-Haven, from entering upon the duties of his office, until late in the month of October, following. Mr. Wheaton was from Litchfield county, in Connecticut, and had five years before, graduated at Yale College, New-Haven. He happily succeeded in reconciling some difficulties which had arisen among the congregation, while they had no rector; and harmony being restored, the Church continued to enjoy its accustomed prosperity. Measures were immediately taken to establish a "permanent fund for the better support of Trinity Church," which by subscriptions, donations, and legacies, in a few years, amounted to ten thousand dollars.

The annual income from this fund has since been applied according to its original intention. Meetings of the vestry, for transacting the business of the Church, have been held monthly. The buildings belonging to the corporation have been kept in good repair, and order and regularity have generally prevailed. The congregation, though constantly subjected to frequent losses, by the removal of many of its valuable members from Newport, gradually increased; numbers were added by baptism, and many were admitted to the holy communion.

In 1833, the Episcopalians had become so numerous in Newport, that it was by some thought advisable, to attempt the establishment of a second Episcopal Church, which was shortly after commenced. Trinity Church formed the nucleus of the new congregation—nearly thirty families and a still larger number of communicants. She has in a measure recovered from the loss thus sustained, by the accession of other families, and by the addition of other members to the communion. This Church is still under the pastoral care of the Rev. Dr. Wheaton.

NOTE G.

The First Congregational Church in Newport was constituted in 1720, when Mr. NATHANIEL CLAPP was ordained its Pastor. In 1728, several members of this Church being dissatisfied with the administration of Mr. Clapp, withdrew, and a new Church was organized, under the pastoral care of the Rev. JOHN ADAMS.

Mr. Clapp continued the pastoral care of the First Church until his death, which occurred the 30th of October, 1745, in the 78th year of his age. From May, 1740, to June, 1743, Mr. Clapp was assisted in the ministry by the Rev. JOSEPH GARDINER, as his colleague; and from June, 1744, to the following May, by the Rev. JONATHAN HELYER. #

Mr. Adams was succeeded, in the pastoral office of the Second Church, by Rev. JAMES SEARING, on the 21st of April, 1731.

In October, 1746, the Rev. WILLIAM VINAL was ordained Pastor of the First Church, and dismissed 1768.

In October, 1755, Rev. EZRA STYLES was ordained Pastor of the Second Church.

April 11, Rev. SAMUEL HOPKINS was installed Pastor of the First Congregational Church, which office he faithfully continued to discharge until his death, in 1803. The ministry of Dr. Hopkins was interrupted by the war with Great-Britain. He removed his family at the commencement of hostilities, and in 1776, when the British took possession of the town, he left it, and retired to his family. But in the spring of 1780, he returned, and resumed his labors with his scattered and impoverished flock, with renewed zeal and faithfulness.

During the war, Rev. Dr. Styles had accepted the Presidency of Yale College; consequently, at the close of the war, the Second Church found themselves without a Pastor, and continued without a settled minister until the year 1786, when the Rev. WILLIAM PATTEN was ordained as their Pastor.

Sept. 12, 1804, Rev. CALEB T. TENNEY was installed Pastor of the First Church, and was dismissed in May, 1815.

In August, 1815, Rev. CALVIN HITCHCOCK was installed over the First Church, and dismissed August, 1820.

July, 1821, Rev. SAMUEL AUSTIN, D. D. was installed Pastor of the same, and was dismissed in 1826.

March, 1830, Rev. WILLIAM H. BEECHER was ordained as their Pastor, and dismissed June, 1833.

Mr. Patten was dismissed from his pastoral charge of the Second Church, in April, 1833, and during the following summer the Churches were united in one body.

The present Pastor of the Church, Rev. A. HENRY DUMONT, was installed Sept. 26, 1833. Soon after the settlement of the Rev. Mr. Dumont, in the pastoral charge of the United Congregational Church and Society in Newport, a new and elegant meeting-house was erected on Spring-street, which, together with the well-known, popular talents of the Rev. gentleman who officiates in that house, secures a large and intelligent congregation.

NOTE H.

In 1758, the Moravians or United Brethren constituted a Church in Newport. The origin of this Church is as follows: In 1749, two Missionaries, Matthew Reutz and George Haske, stopped at Newport, on their way to Surinam. While here, they formed an acquaintance with the Rev. Timothy Peckham, a Sabbatarian preacher, who kindly received them at his house, and introduced them to several pious persons, who desired them to preach to them the unsearchable riches of Christ. This request was complied with, and at their departure, deep solicitude was expressed by their hearers, that a teacher from among the Brethren, might be sent to gather a congregation in Newport.

These Brethren no sooner arrived at their place of destination, than they wrote to Bethlehem, (Penn.) and requested that some of the Brethren at that place, if possible, should make them a visit. Soon after, two Brethren from Bethlehem made them a visit, and others from time to time, until the constitution of the Church, in 1758.

The first Pastor of this Church, was the Rev. RICHARD UTLEY.

The second Pastor was Rev. THOMAS YARRELL.

The third Pastor was Rev. FREDERICK SMITH.

These were Pastors of the Church, from its constitution until the year 1765.

The fourth Pastor was the Rev. LEWIS RUSMEYER, who held this office from 1766 to 1783.

From 1785 to 1802, the Rev. FREDERICK SMITH held the pastoral office of the Church.

The sixth Pastor was Rev. SAMUEL TOWLE, from 1803 to 1819.

His successor was Rev. GEORGE G. MILLER, who remained with the Church as their Pastor but one year.

In 1821, Rev. JOHN G. HERMAN became the Pastor of this Church, the duties of which office he continued to discharge until 1823.

The ninth Pastor, Rev. CHARLES A. VAN VLECK, served the Church from 1827 to 1834. The tenth and present Pastor is Rev. CHARLES F. SEIDEL, who commenced his pastoral labors in 1837.

NOTE I.

The Fourth Baptist Church in Newport, was organized June 23d, 1783. The original members of the Church, were nine males; and these were chiefly from the Second Baptist Church in this town, who not feeling satisfied to remain in that Church, withdrew and formed this. They had no definite creed drawn up, or expressed; but were established on the broad principle, making Christian experience and character the only indispensable terms of fellowship and communion, as appears by a vote passed in church-meeting, December 28th, 1783, "we unitedly agree to extend our fellowship to all Christians maintaining a good character, and to receive the bread in communion from the hands of any Gospel minister of Christ, in good character." Also, the liberty and duty to prophecy or exhort, in all or any meetings of the Church, was most fully recognised and maintained.

Church-meeting, April 17th, 1794, "Voted, that the duty and privilege of the improvement of gifts, be recognised by the Church, and due attention thereto, mutually recommended in all meetings for public worship, without distinction of time or place. Ordered, that a record be made of the rights, liberties, and privileges of the Church, agreeable to our first engagement." This Church was decidedly Anti-Slavery. Church-meeting, Nov. 30th, 1783, "after looking to God as usual, unitedly agreed that we could not receive any into our fellowship, nor approbate them to improve in any way, that hold their fellow creatures in slavery during life, when they have not in any wise forfeited their liberty."

The first ministers in this Church, were Rev. CALEB GREEN and WILLIAM MOORE, who were ordained Nov. 27th, 1796, and were succeeded by JOHN ORMSBEE, a member of the Baptist Church in North Providence.

Mr. Ormsbee was ordained the 14th of September, 1821, and removed to Wickford in 1822. Between this time and 1826, Elder Green and Elder James Graham preached with them a short time; the last being invited to become their Pastor, but was under the necessity of returning to Beaufort, S. C., in consequence of the disease of the minister of the Church in that place.

Their next minister was JAMES A. M'KENZIE, who was ordained to the pastoral office of the Church, August 12th, 1830. Mr. M'Kenzie was succeeded by the Rev. SAMUEL ROBBINS, of Buxton, Me. November, 1835.

Mr. M'Kenzie again succeeded to the pastoral office of the Church, in April, 1837, and is the present Pastor. This Church in 1829, had become nearly extinct for the want of a Pastor's care and labor, although our beloved brother, Green Burroughs,* whose praise is in all the Churches, had done all he could to sustain it.— Application was made to the First Baptist Church, for help; when bro. M'Kenzie, Dea. George Tilley, John Pratt, and Charles Tilley, were dismissed from the First Church, and united with them.— Since that time, the Church has gradually increased, both in numerical and moral power.

Their first meeting-house was in Division-street, which they sold to, and is now occupied by our colored friends. The house they now occupy and own, is the Clarke-street meeting-house, which they took possession of, August 30th, 1835. This Church is associated with the Free Will Baptists.

* Since deceased.

NOTE K.

Previous to the year 1805, Newport was occasionally visited by Methodist Clergymen, having the oversight of that district of country, in which Newport was situated. Among these were the Rev. Messrs. Garretson, Lee, Cooper, Chapin, Nickerman, Hall, Pickering, Taylor, Bishop, Lyel, Coxe, &c., who, we are informed, left fruits of their labor, which were gathered into the Churches, then established.

In December, 1805, the Presiding Elder of this district was pleased to send to this place the Rev. R. HUBBARD, who commenced his mission in the First Baptist meeting-house, under the pastoral care of the Rev. Michael Eddy.

Mr. Hubbard finding himself encouraged to proceed, applied for the use of the Seventh-day Baptist house, to be used on the Sabbath until something permanent could be had; but for some reason not at present known, it was refused. He succeeded, however, in obtaining the Council Chamber, in the State House, where he continued to dispense the word of life, until his congregation so increased, as made it necessary to remove to the Representatives Chamber, in the same building. Here he continued his labors until the Lord graciously opened the way, and gave to his Methodist children the beautiful edifice in which they now worship. This building was erected in 1806, and dedicated and used (though in an imperfect state) in May, 1807.

It should be borne in mind, that the ministry of this Church is strictly itinerant; no preacher being stationed for more than one year, and none permitted to remain in charge of the same Society, more than two successive years. This will account for the number of preachers that have officiated in this Church. The first of whom was the Rev. Mr. HUBBARD, who continued here two years. He was succeeded by Rev. Messrs. Merwin, Webb, Frost, and Lambert, when the latter was succeeded by Mr. WEBB, who became a local preacher, and remained with the Church nine years. Mr. Webb then united himself again with the Conference, and was succeeded by Messrs. Mudge, Norris, Puffer, Tucker, Kent, Lord, Jansen, Ely, and the present Pastor, Rev. JONATHAN CADY, under most of whose labors the Lord has been graciously pleased to pour

out his Spirit, which not unfrequently carried its reviving influences through the whole heritage of God, in this place.

It is but just perhaps to remark, that in the early days of Methodism, in Newport, its doctrine being in some respects new or misunderstood, or perhaps both, was sustained by a large proportion of wealth; and for some years, was a fashionable place of worship.—But as their doctrines became better understood, and continued to be enforced with a zeal becoming the faithful ambassadors of Jesus Christ, there were many who could not bear a bold and discriminating exhibition of the truth, and the congregation somewhat decreased, until circumstances painful to the Christian community, (over which the Church had no control) transpired, which so divided and subdivided it, as at this day, to leave but few in comparison with its former number. But God has not forsaken them in all their trials, nor suffered his faithfulness to fail. They are now increasing in numerical and moral power. They are a little band closely united in the bonds of Christian fellowship and love, and destined, we trust, to exert a more powerful influence in this community, than in the day of their greatest prosperity.

There is also a small Church of the Methodist denomination in Portsmouth, on the North part of the Island, which has a convenient house of worship, and is regularly supplied with the ministry of the word of life.

NOTE L.

In 1824, several individuals of the people of color, in this town, (among whom was Newport Gardiner, who subsequently died at Liberia,) formed themselves into a religious society, under a written constitution, by the name of the "Colored Union Church and Society, in Newport, Rhode-Island." The object of this association, as seen in the preamble to the constitution, was their own mutual edification, the prosperity and happiness of their children, and the promotion of the best interests of the people of color, generally. And although they have never enjoyed the labors of a settled Pastor, yet, such has been their zeal for the house of the Lord, and such their unceasing devotion to the object of this union, that they have constantly maintained religious worship among themselves, (when no preacher could be obtained) at least once on each Sabbath, from that time.

This Society, although small in numerical power, and limited in facilities of prosperity, have persevered with a zeal worthy of the Philanthropist and Christian, until they now occupy and own a very neat and commodious house of worship. Since the purchase of the house in 1835, it has been raised, and a basement story added, which is occupied as a school room, &c. &c. The upper apartment has also been remodeled and undergone a thorough repair, and is furnished with regular slips. There is also among them a society for promoting the education of colored children and youth, called the "School Fund Association," which sustains an instructress the greater part of the year. God has graciously smiled upon and prospered the work of their hands; and during the past winter, filled their temple with his presence and glory, subduing the hearts of many among them to the obedience of the faith, while such who had been looking for the salvation of God to come out of Zion, have been made to sing, "Lo! this is our God; we have waited for him, he will save us. This is the Lord; we have waited for him; we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation."

NOTE M.

Soon after the extensive works at Fort Adams were commenced by the United States in 1825, Newport was occasionally visited by a Roman Catholic Priest, to look after the spiritual interests of that class of our population, belonging to the Catholic Church, many of whom had been induced to take up their residence in Newport, by finding employment at the Fort.

The Rev. ROBERT D. WOOLLY, a native of Virginia, was the first Catholic Priest that organized a congregation in this place; for the accommodation of which, he purchased of E. Trevett, Esq. in 1828, the School house in Barney-street, where divine worship was maintained for several years. Mr. Woolly resigned his charge of the mission in 1831, and was immediately succeeded by the Rev. JOHN CORRY, who officiated in that congregation, until August, 1837.

In the spring of 1833, Mr. Corry opened a subscription for the erection of a Church, which was commenced the latter part of that same year, and completed in 1836. The house is spacious and well finished, and occupies a commanding site at the head of Barney-street. The estimated cost of building, lot, &c., was about \$4,000; all of which was contributed and paid by the Catholics, at Fort Adams.

On the 20th of August, 1837, the Church was dedicated under the title of "St. Joseph," by the Rt. Rev. Bishop FENWICK, of Boston, Mass. On the following day, the Rev. Mr. Corry, under whose superintendence the Church had been erected and completed, resigned his charge of the mission, and was succeeded by the Rev. CONSTANTINE LEE, the present rector of the Catholic congregation; in this town.

It is but an act of justice, perhaps, for me to say, that although the Catholics most scrupulously and pertinaciously regard their own rights and ceremonies of religious worship, yet, they studiously avoid all interference with, and uniformly respect the rights of all denominations in the place. And this feeling toward the Catholics, so far as I have been able to ascertain, is mutual, and reciprocated by every sect of Protestant Christians in the town; demonstrating that the great principles of religious toleration and liberty of con-

science, established on this Island two hundred years ago, as the basis of the Colony of Rhode-Island, have come down to us unimpaired, and are fully enjoyed by "people of all persuasions."

The Rev. Mr. Corry, in a letter to the author, speaking of the people of Newport, says, "It is but just for me to add, that I have never seen a town in the United States, among whose inhabitants there is less intolerance and religious bigotry. I have for six years, been more or less among them, and during that period, none have denied me the common civilities of life, because I was a Catholic Priest, but always treated me with the greatest respect." And in proof of the practical existence of religious toleration in Newport, he says, "Our Church stood for upward of two years, with its windows unprotected by blinds, and during that time, not one pane of glass was broken." The Catholic population of Newport, when suitable appropriations are made by Government, for the vigorous prosecution of the works at Fort Adams, is about four hundred.

NOTE N.

Early in 1833, the Second Episcopal Parish was formed in this place, by members of Trinity Church. After the due organization of the Parish, and an application to the Episcopal Missionary Convocation of Rhode-Island, the Rev. JOHN WEST, the present worthy rector of the Church, commenced his labors as the minister of the Parish. On the 17th of March, 1833, public worship commenced in the State House ; from which the congregation soon removed to the house of the First Congregational Society, at that time unoccupied. A subscription was immediately opened for building a new Church, which as soon as \$6,000 were subscribed, was commenced. In June of the following year, the new Church was completed and consecrated. The cost of the building, including organ and furniture, together with the lot, was about \$17,000. Of this sum, about \$11,000 was realized from the sale of the pews, and the remainder by a noble act of generosity, contributed and paid by individual members of the corporation.

The Parish has now a fund of nearly \$5,000 in pews, and of the 112 pews in the Church, at least one hundred of them are sold or rented. At the present date, this Parish has been but five years in existence; and the contemplation of its history affords many pleasing evidences that the Divine Head of the Church has "poured upon it the continual dew of his blessing." Accessions have been constantly made to the Church, and on an average, the additions to the communion have been about thirty a year.

This Church from its commencement, has enjoyed great domestic tranquillity and peace. No unhappy difference of opinions has arisen among them, resulting in unfriendly dissensions and divisions ; or any thing found on the pages of her history, to tarnish the glory and beauty of the Zion of God. The congregation is large, and their attendance on the public and social services of the Church, worthy of imitation.

This Church has engaged in the cause of missions, with a liberality and zeal becoming the dignity of the Christian character, and the magnitude and importance of the great missionary enterprise. Their annual contributions for home missionary purposes in Rhode-

Island, amount to not less than \$150, and for foreign missions and other benevolent purposes, their contributions equal, if not excel that sum.

In the year 1834, a missionary was sent by the Rhode-Island Convocation to Portsmouth, R. I. A Parish was organized under the name of St. Paul's Church. Within one year, a respectable house of worship was erected, and with the aid of about \$1200, in contributions from Episcopalians in other places, was entirely paid for; and at the same time, a fund was secured in pews for the support of the minister, amounting to more than one thousand dollars. The labors of a zealous, devoted missionary in that place, have been blessed to the gathering of a respectable congregation, and an addition of about forty members to the communion of the Church. The Rhode-Island Convocation has contributed toward the support of the minister of the Parish, up to the present time, nearly 2000 dollars.

NOTE O.

An association of gentlemen friendly to Unitarian views of doctrine, was formed in this town during the month of October, 1835. Their earliest meetings for Divine service, were held in the State House. In the course of the following month, they purchased of the Fourth Baptist Society, in this place, the Church in Mill-street. This Church had originally belonged to the First Congregational Church and Society, over which the celebrated Dr. Hopkins presided for many years, as Pastor.

A charter was granted to the association, by the General Assembly of the State, at their January session, in 1836, incorporating them as the "Unitarian Congregational Church," in Newport. Soon after this, the Society commenced rebuilding and remodelling the old house in Mill-street, worshipping in the mean time at Masonic Lodge, in Church-street. The work was completed in the spring of 1836; and for elegance, neatness, and taste, in its internal arrangements, is perhaps, unequalled in Rhode-Island.

The new house, (for only the frame of the old building had been retained, together with the corner stone, bearing the inscription, "For Christ and Peace,") was dedicated on the 27th of July, that same year. The Rev. CHARLES T. BROOKS, of Salem, Mass., was called as the first Pastor, in January, 1837, and ordained June 14th, of the same year. The organization of a Church was begun in the summer of 1837. The communion of the Lord's supper was first administered on Sunday, October 3d, and continues to be administered monthly.

NOTE P.

There are two Churches of the Christian denomination on the Island, one in Middletown, the other in Portsmouth. The Church in Middletown was organized October 14th, 1828. Their first Pastor was the Rev. HARVEY SULLINGS, who served the Church with acceptance and success, for nearly five years from its constitution. Mr. Sullings subsequently removed to and settled in Bristol, and is now Pastor of the Christian Church in that place.

Their second Pastor was the Rev. ELIJAH MACOMBER, who continued with them until the summer of 1835, when he requested and received his dismission. The Rev. JAMES TAYLOR, the present Pastor of the Church, was his successor. Mr. Taylor entered on the duties of his office in this Church, in the autumn of 1835, and his labors have been signally blessed of God, in the conversion of sinners, and the edification of the Church. During his ministry, large accessions have been made to their number, and the Church is now flourishing under his administration. They own a very neat and commodious house of worship, about three miles from Newport, erected soon after the constitution of the Church.

The Church in Portsmouth was constituted October 16th, 1834. Its first Pastor was the Rev. ZALMON TOBEY. His ministry commenced with this people, in April, 1834, and continued for two years; during which time, six members were added to the Church.

His successor in the pastoral office of this Church, was the Rev. JOHN TAYLOR. He commenced his labors with them on the first day of June, A. D. 1837, and still continues his pastoral charge. Mr. Taylor's labors have been blessed in this Church, and during his ministry more than thirty have been added to their number. The house in which they worship, was erected in 1821, by voluntary subscription, and is called the "Union Meeting-House." It is pleasantly situated on a beautiful eminence, in Portsmouth, on the East main road, about half way from Newport to the Stone Bridge which connects the Island with the main land, at Tiverton.

From this brief and imperfect sketch of the history of Zion, on this Island of the sea, we cannot but feel that a lasting tribute of gratitude and praise belongs to the Great Father of our being, for the continued exercise of his faithfulness and love, in perpetuating the existence and prosperity of the Church, in this town. There has been, and doubtless now is, much in the Church, both in principle and practice, displeasing to God, and hostile to the true dignity and glory of the Church. Yet under his gracious smiles, and the broad, expansive principles of Christian benevolence and liberality of sentiment here enjoyed, her prosperity has been such as to call for devout acknowledgments to the Great Author of all good, from every pious heart.

It is not among the least distinguished blessings which demand a song of praise, that the same noble and elevated sentiments, the same dignified and exalted spirit which inspired the heart of that little band of lonely pilgrims, who here unfurled the banner of religious freedom two hundred years ago, still glows in the bosom and can be traced in the history of their sons. One hundred years ago this day, from the walls of Zion in this place, the beloved Calender proclaims, "That the Bible contains the religion of Christians, and that the Word of God is a sufficient rule of faith and worship." That "every man's opinions must be taken from his own understanding and judgment, and not from the understanding and judgment of other men." And such it is believed are the sentiments of this intelligent and enlightened religious community, to-day. We claim, as our birth-right, the most entire freedom of thought and expression, on every question of religion and conscience; and this right belongs to all; to the most ignorant, as well as the most intelligent disciple of Jesus Christ.

But if with all these advantages for becoming extensively acquainted with the Holy Scriptures, of knowing the will of God, and of becoming deeply and eminently pious, we neglect the sacred volume, and become insensible to the high responsibilities of our trust, we shall have reason to fear the displeasure of that Divine Being, to whom we are indebted for all our prosperity, and without whose blessing, none can hope to prosper.

In a community like ours, where each individual enjoys the right of searching the scriptures for himself, and adopting his own mode of religious worship, it is impossible but that (through the imperfection of human judgment) a diversity of opinions in matters of conscience, should be entertained. Uniformity in the circum-

stantials of religion, is in no respect, the genius of a free and popular form of government. And although all the true disciples of Jesus perfectly harmonize in the great principles of salvation, yet each denomination of Christians is marked by some peculiarity which distinguishes it from another; and perhaps no two denominations can be found, whose forms or modes of worship are exactly and in all respects, alike. It becomes us, therefore, as the disciples of Jesus, to cultivate a spirit of mutual concession and forbearance. Let us cherish an unwillingness to contend about trifles: and where differences are unavoidable, let us never be betrayed into unjust and uncharitable censures of each other, but in the spirit of meekness, unitedly implore the divine forgiveness, and that God would hasten onward the day when the watchmen shall see eye to eye; when the Church of Christ shall put on the garments of her majesty and glory, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

“ Thus shall we best proclaim abroad,
The honors of our Saviour God;
When his salvation reigns within,
And grace subdues the power of sin.”

AMEX.

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